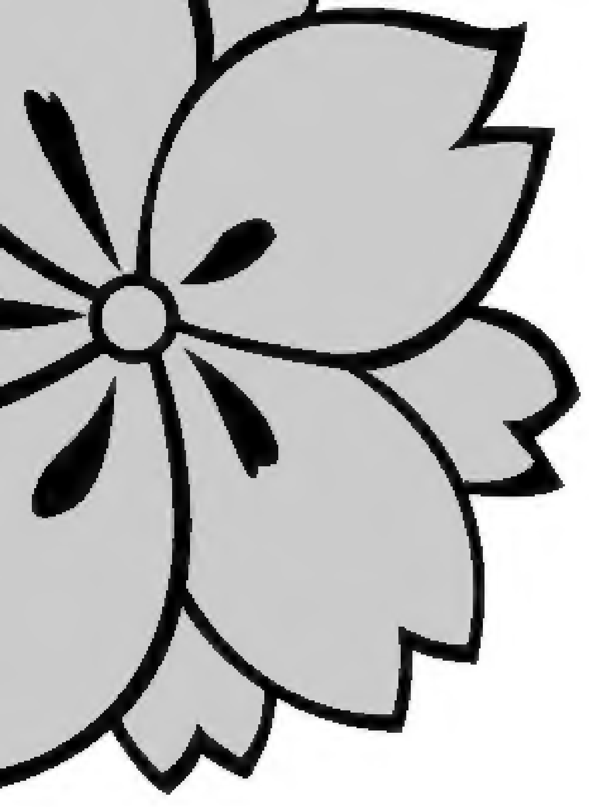
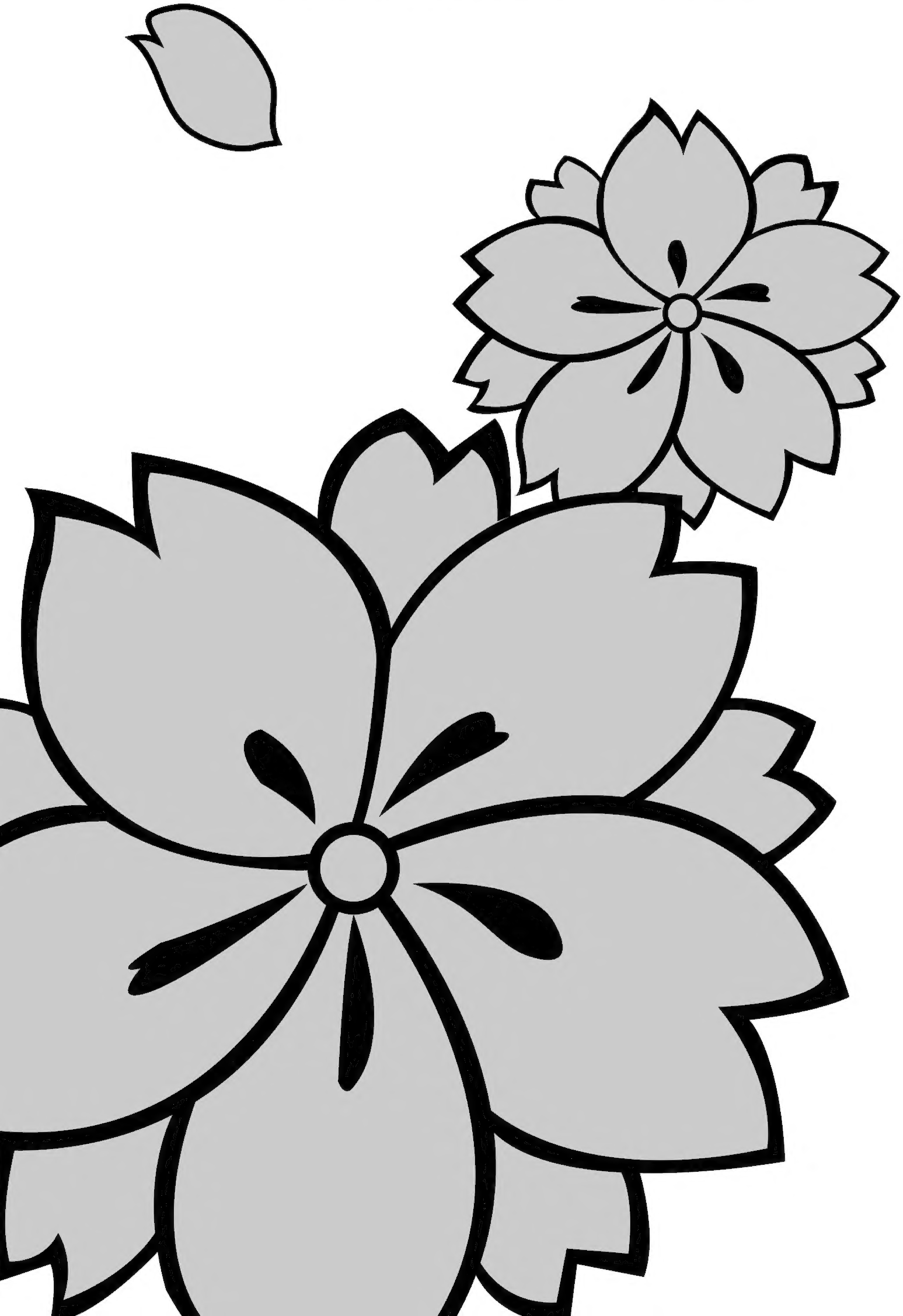
17

Yozakura Quartet

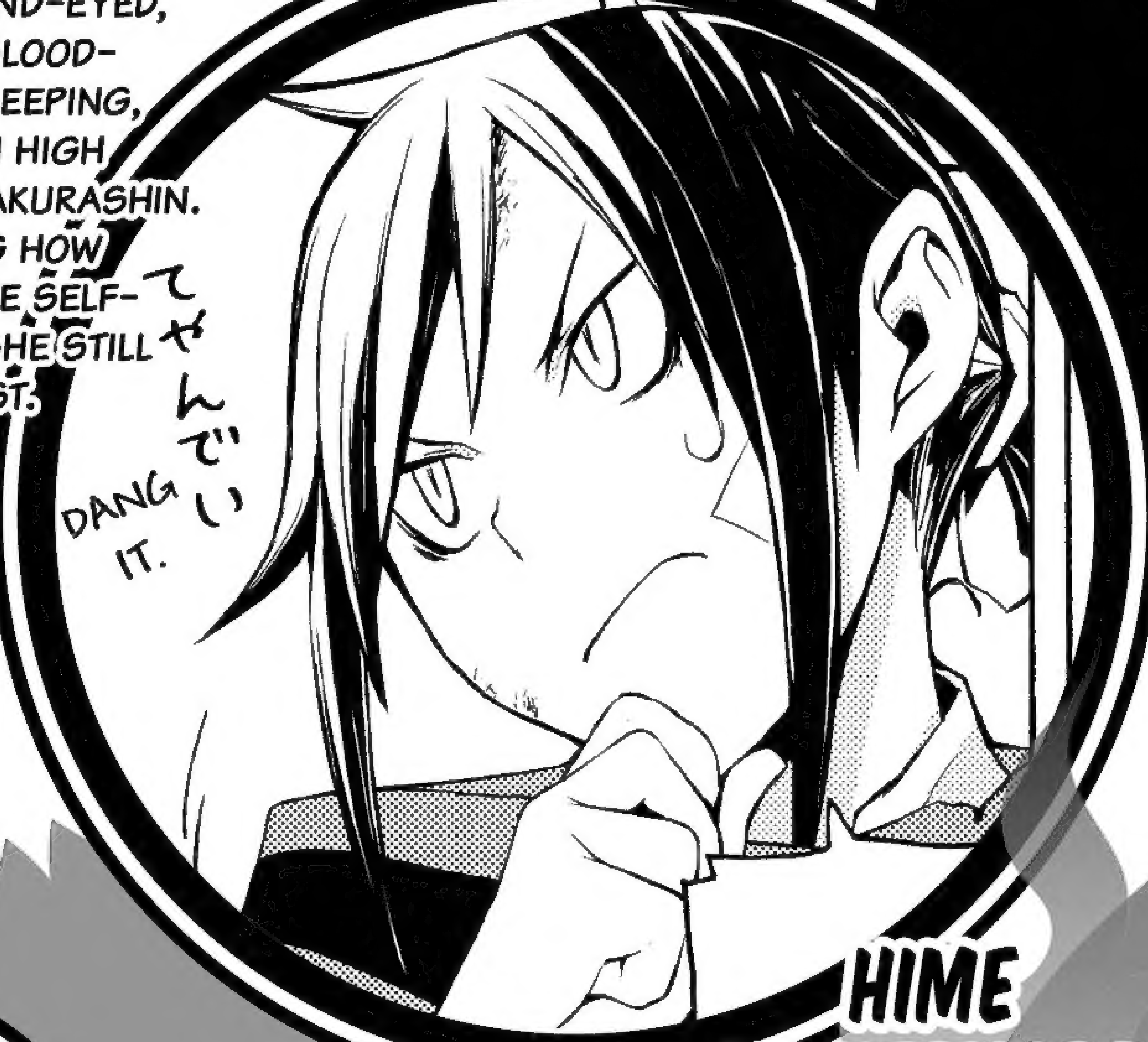
Suzuhito Yasuda



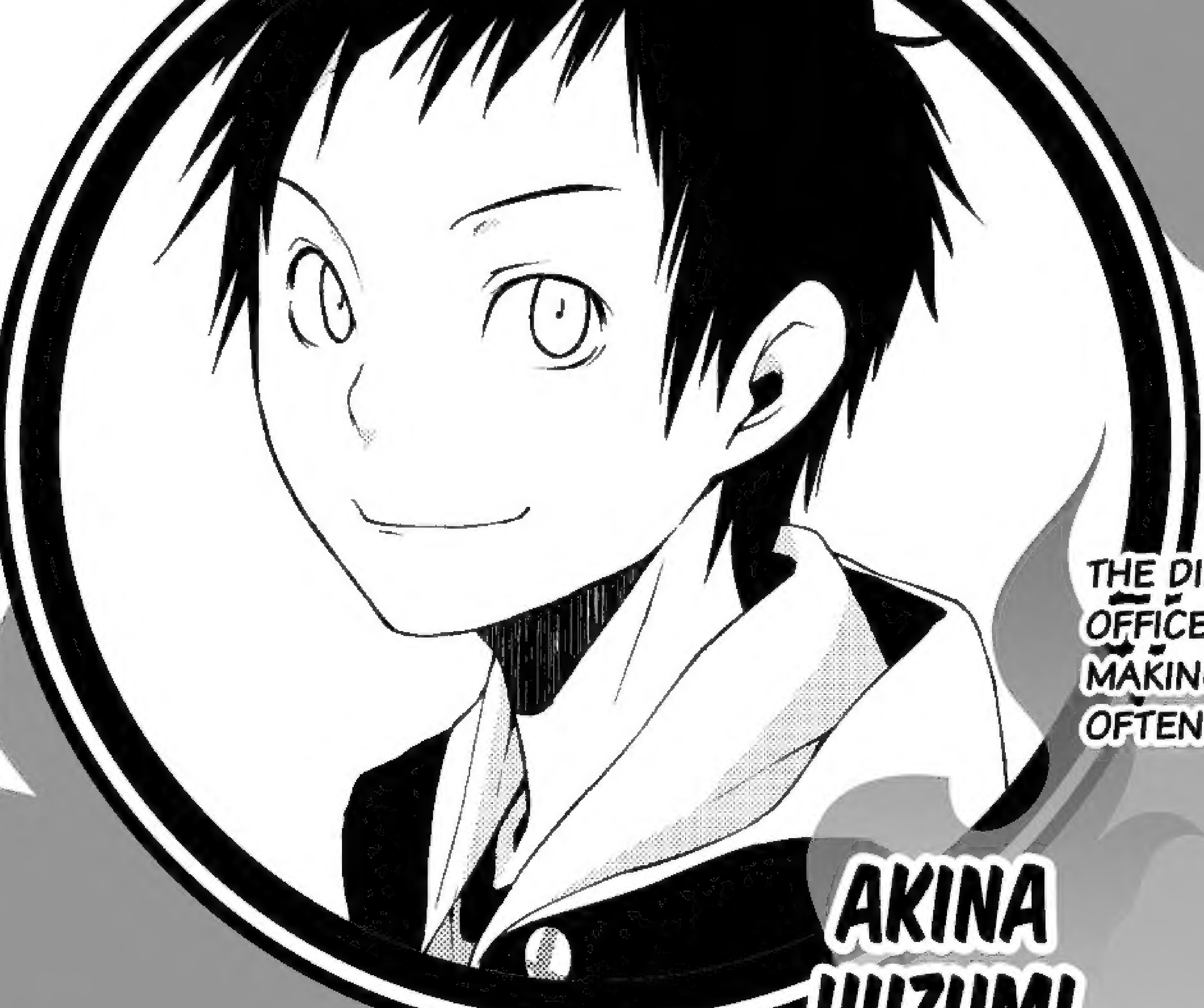
YOZAKURA QUARTET 17



A RAMBUNCTIOUS, MOODY, ALMOND-EYED, NOODLE/COMEDY-LOVING, LOW-BLOOD-PRESSURED, HEALTHY, SOUND-SLEEPING, SCARF-CLAD, PONYTAILED DEMON HIGH SCHOOLER AND THE MAYOR OF SAKURASHIN. LATELY, SHE'S STARTED LEARNING HOW TO COOK IN AN EFFORT TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT. EVEN SO, IT SEEMS SHE STILL LOVES AKINA'S COOKING THE MOST.


てやんでい
DANG IT.

HIME YARIZAKURA



AKINA HIIZUMI

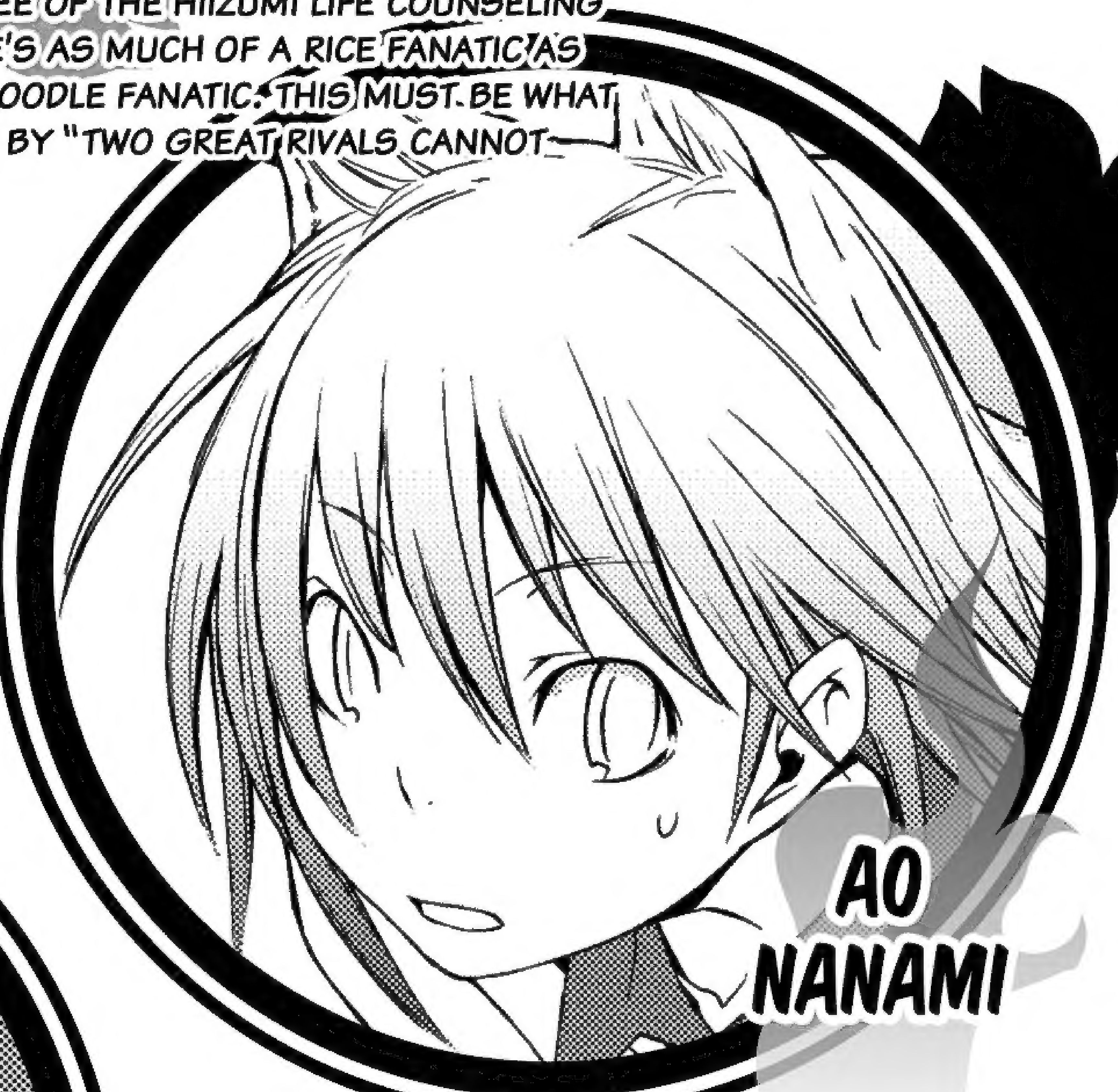
THE DIRECTOR OF THE HIIZUMI LIFE COUNSELING OFFICE. AS ABOUT 20% OF HIS WORKDAY GOES INTO MAKING FOOD FOR HIME AND HIS EMPLOYEES, HE'S OFTEN IN THE OFFICE VERY LATE.

Quartet of cherry blossoms in the night

YOZAKURA QUARTET

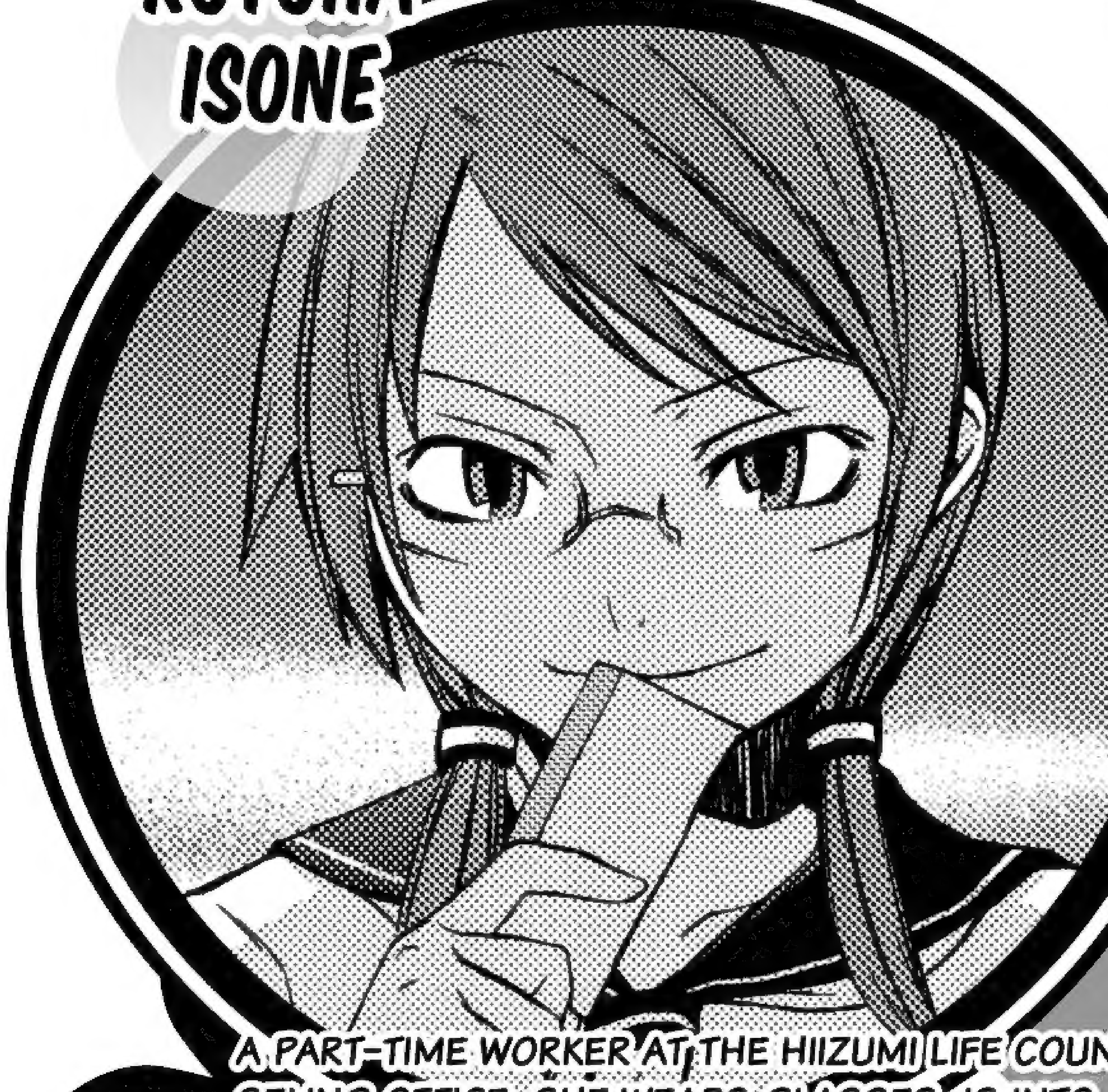
CHARACTER PROFILE

AN EMPLOYEE OF THE HIIZUMI LIFE COUNSELING OFFICE. SHE'S AS MUCH OF A RICE FANATIC AS HIME IS A NOODLE FANATIC. THIS MUST BE WHAT THEY MEAN BY "TWO GREAT RIVALS CANNOT COEXIST."

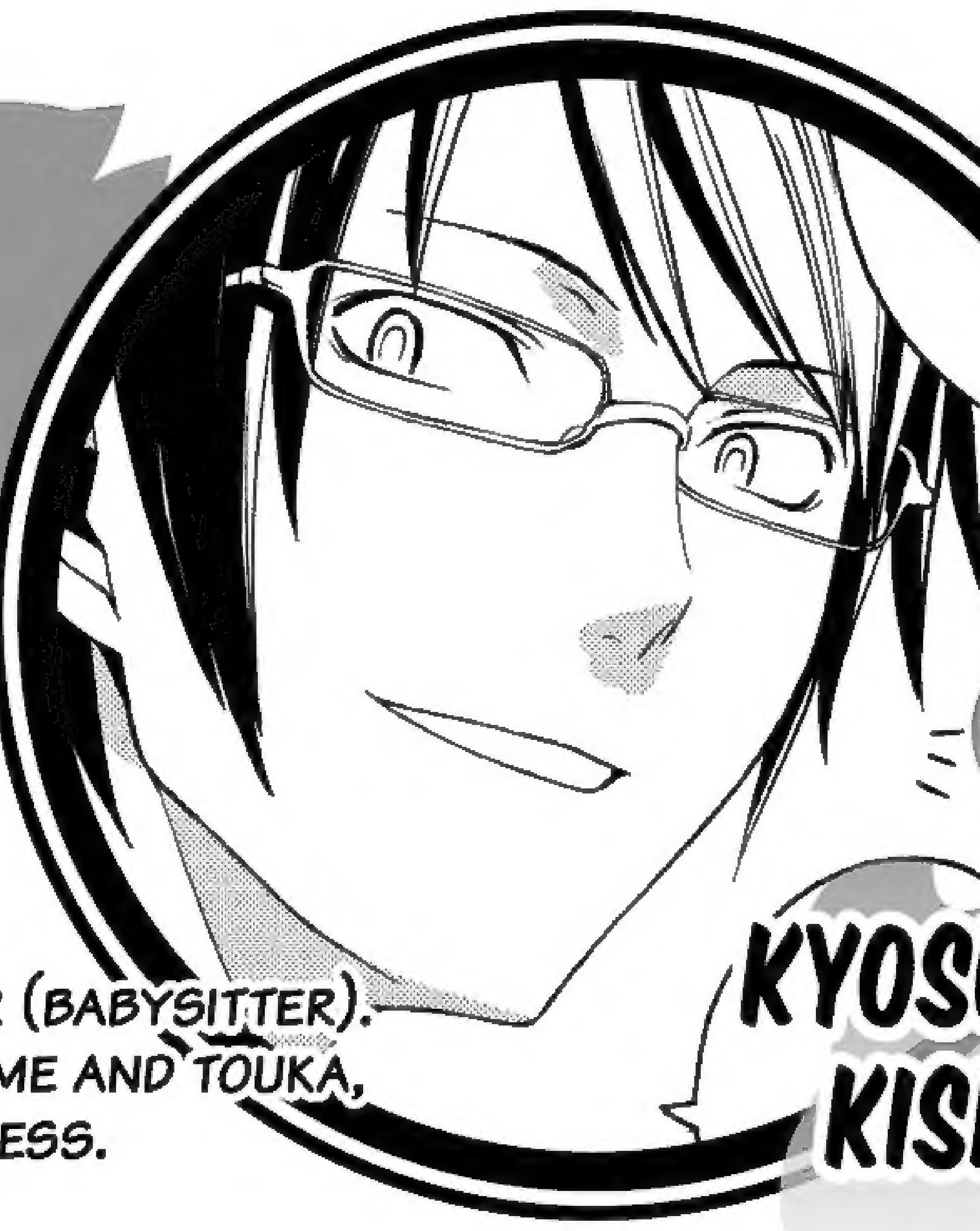


AO NANAMI

KOTOHA ISONE

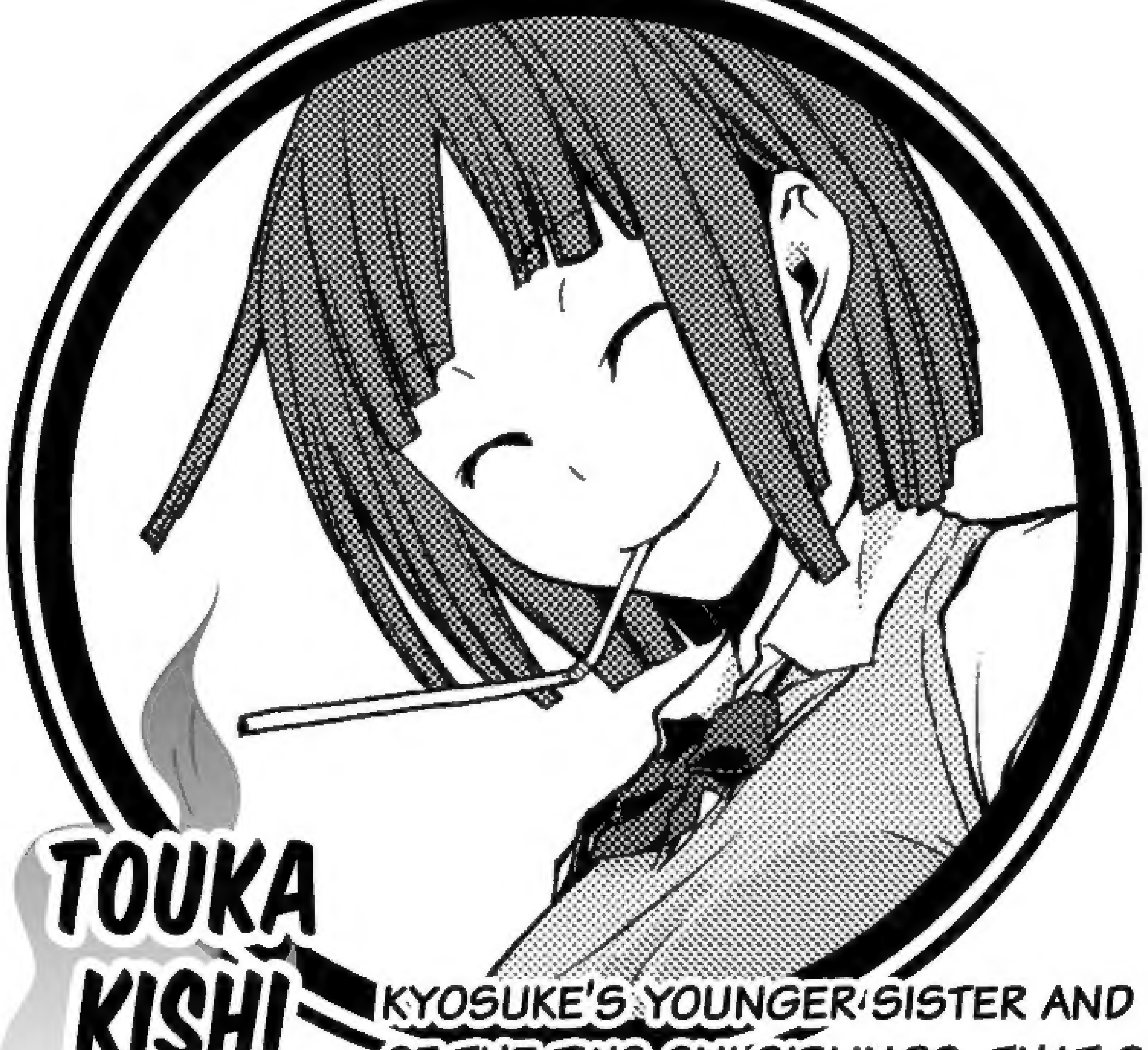


A PART-TIME WORKER AT THE HIIZUMI LIFE COUNSELING OFFICE. SHE WEARS GLASSES, IS INTO GIRLS, AND HAS BIG BOOBS, AMONG OTHER CLICHÉS, BUT SHE ALSO HAS THE MOST REFRESHING PERSONALITY.



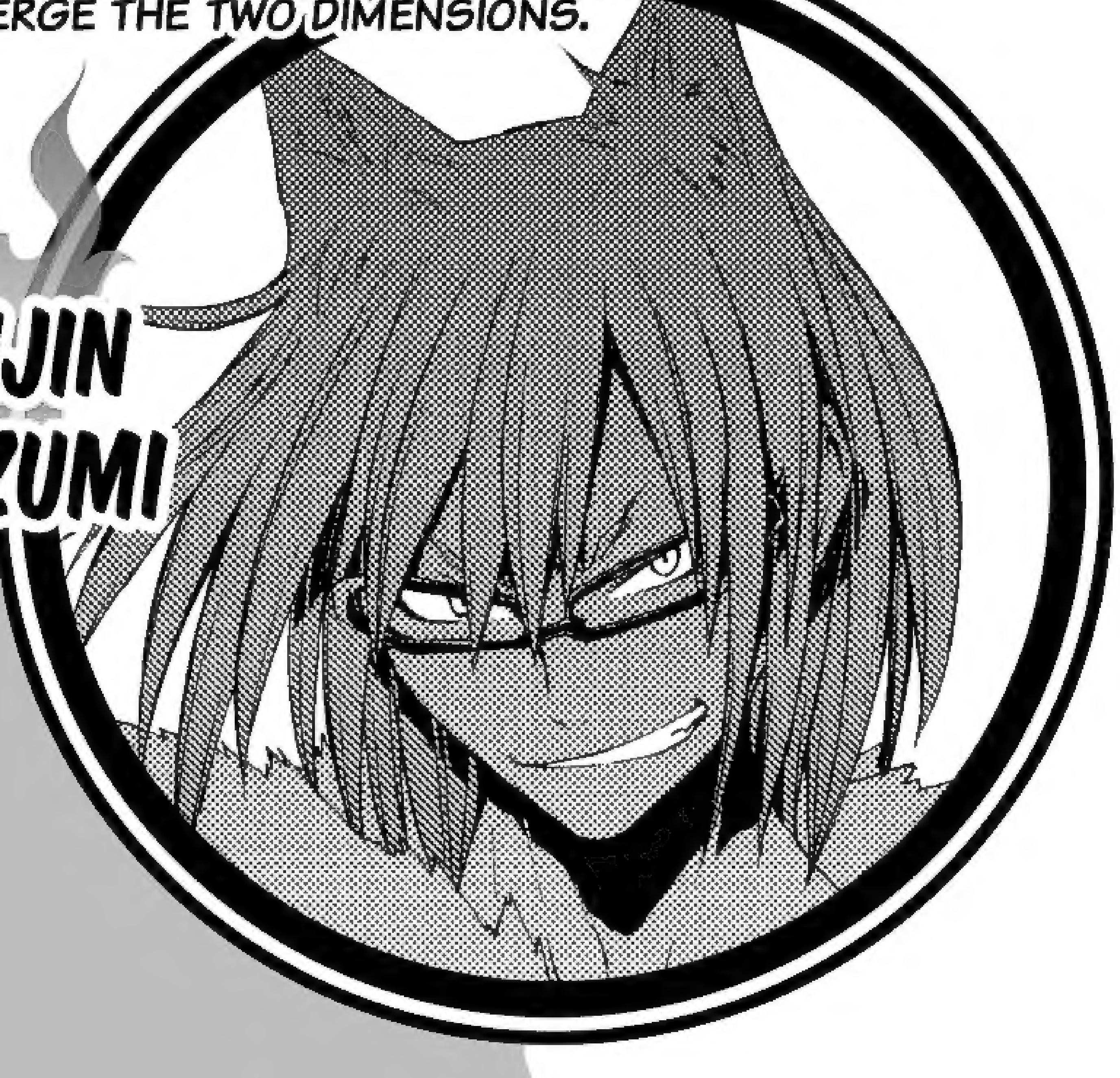
HIME'S ASSISTANT AND OVERSEER (BABYSITTER). HE HAS TO TAKE CARE OF BOTH HIME AND TOUKA, SO HIS DAYS ARE FILLED WITH STRESS.

KYOSUKE KISHI



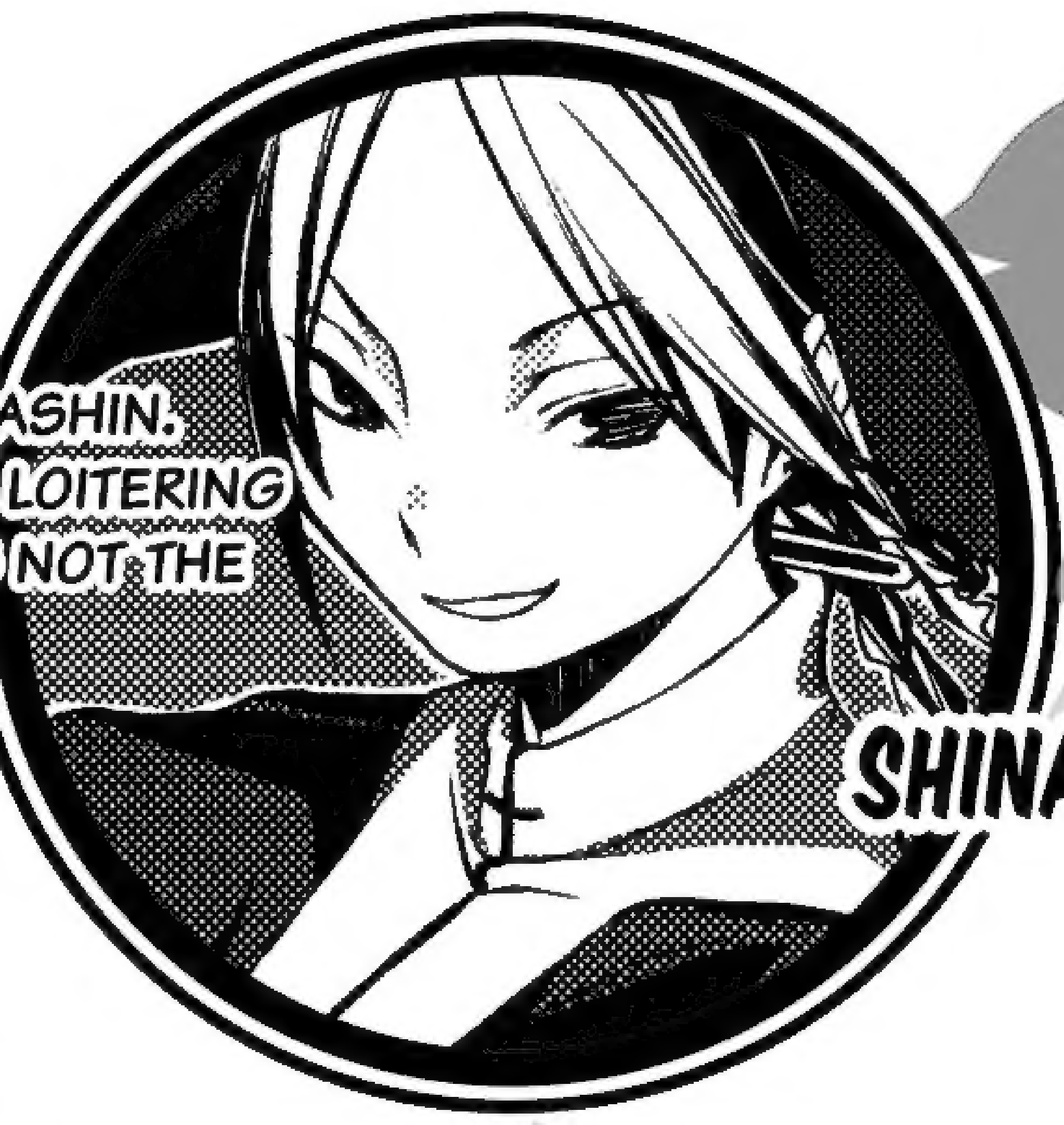
A DESCENDANT OF ENYOU HIIZUMI. HE TOOK OVER THE BODY OF GIN, AO'S OLDER BROTHER, AND HE IS PLANNING TO MAKE THE SEVEN PILLARS BLOOM IN ORDER TO MERGE THE TWO DIMENSIONS.

ENJIN HIIZUMI



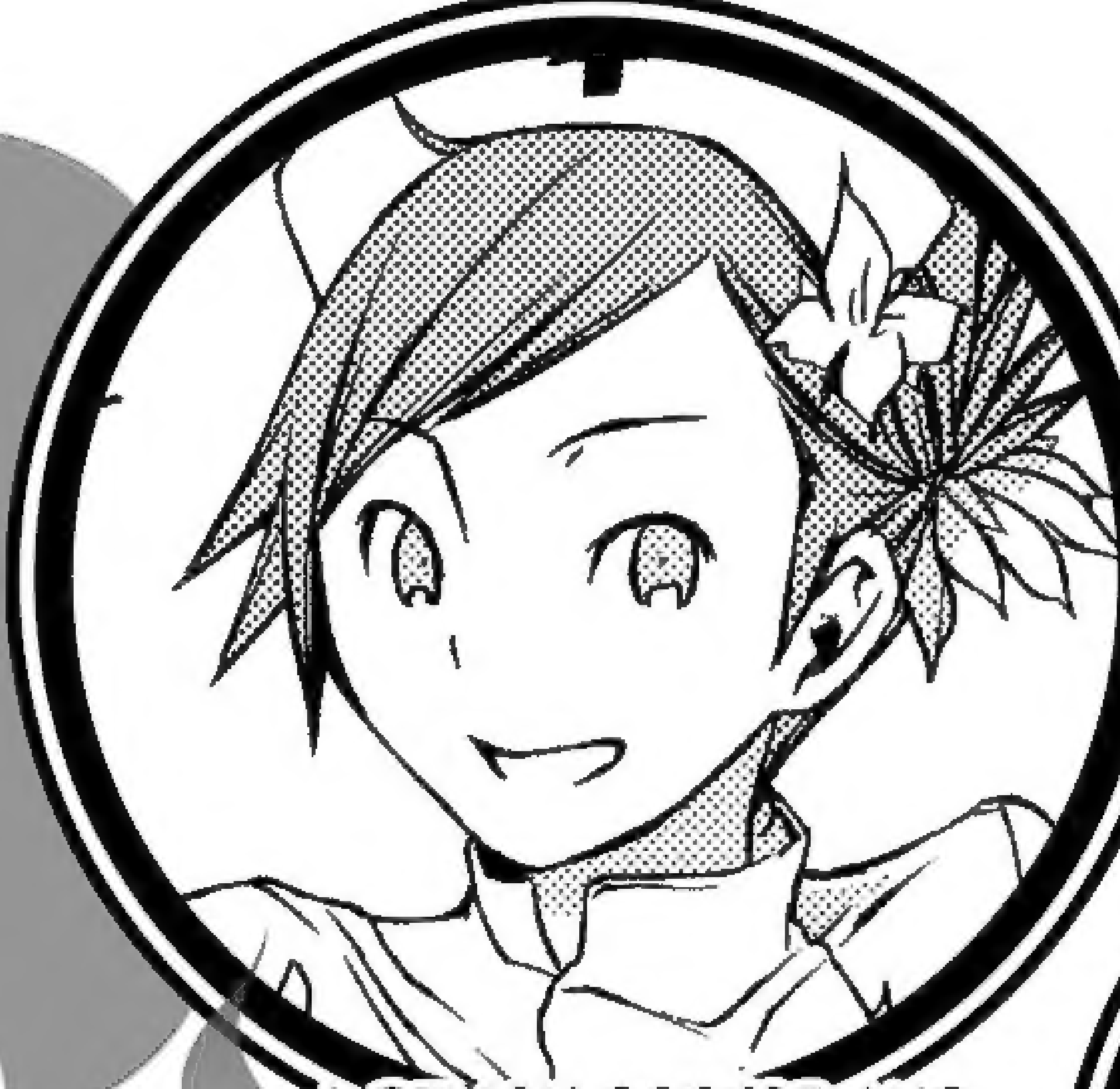
TOUKA KISHI

KYOSUKE'S YOUNGER SISTER AND THE FAIRER HALF OF THE TWO ONI SIBLINGS. THAT SAID, SHE LEADS THE MOST NORMAL LIFE, AS BEFITTING A HIGH-SCHOOL GIRL. SHE USED TO DO ARCHERY, BUT NOW PRACTICES AIKIDO.



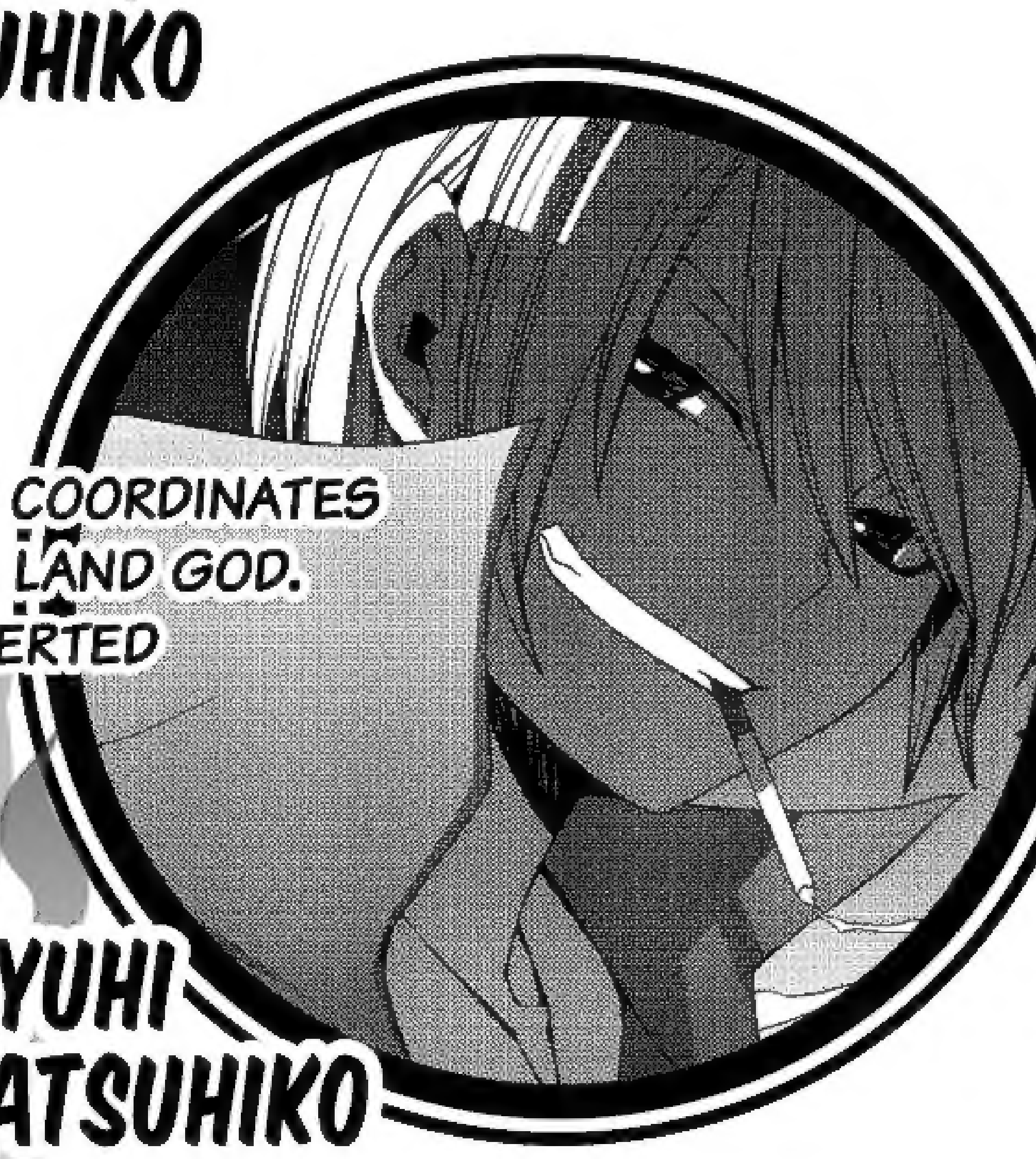
YAE SHINATSUHIKO

THE LAND GOD OF SAKURASHIN. SHE CAN OFTEN BE SEEN LOITERING AROUND TOWN, SO SHE'S NOT THE MOST DIGNIFIED DEITY.



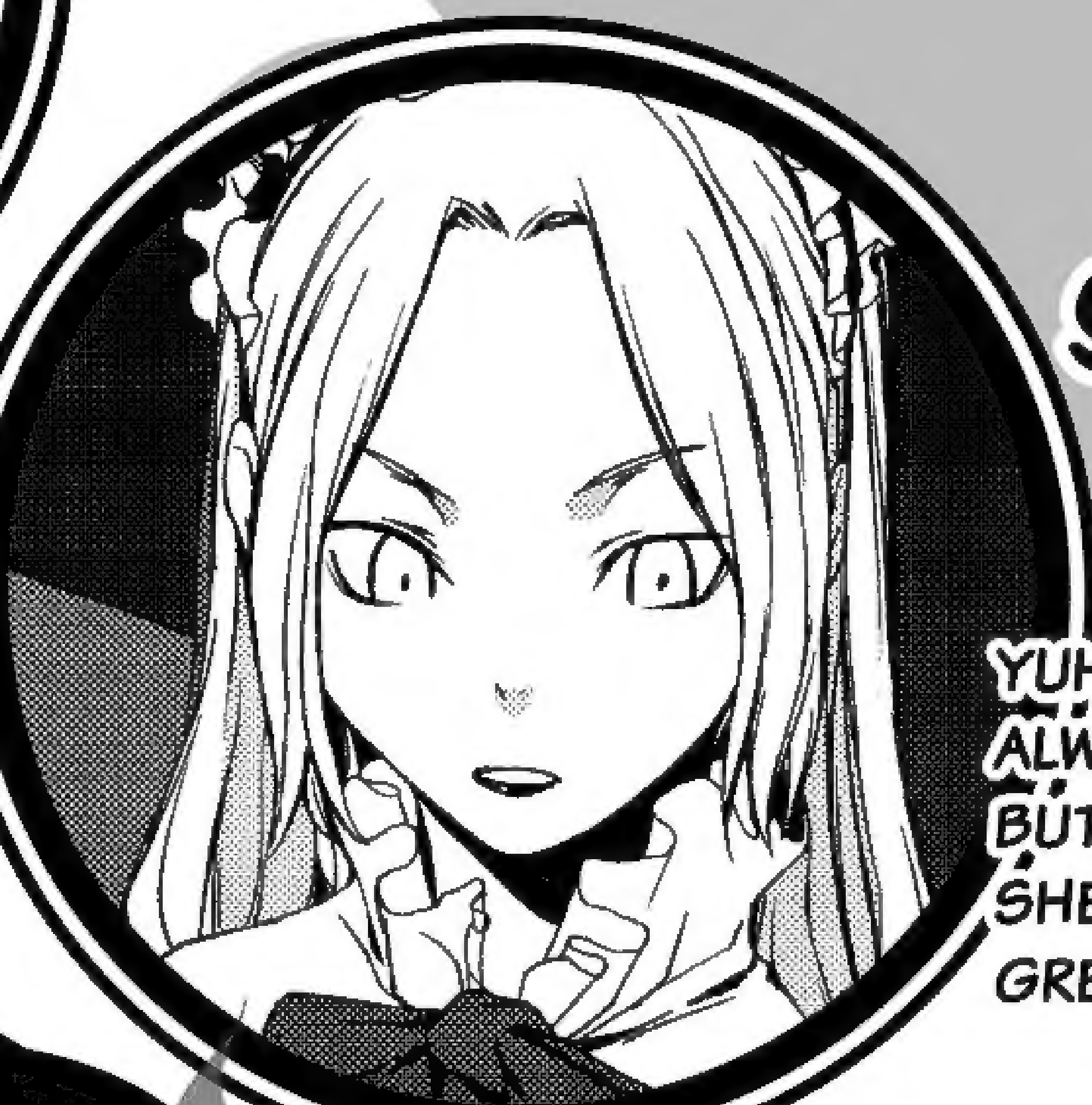
JURI

A DEMON DOCTOR AND TOWN ICON. SHE HAS BEEN ABSTAINING FROM SHOW BUSINESS LATELY.



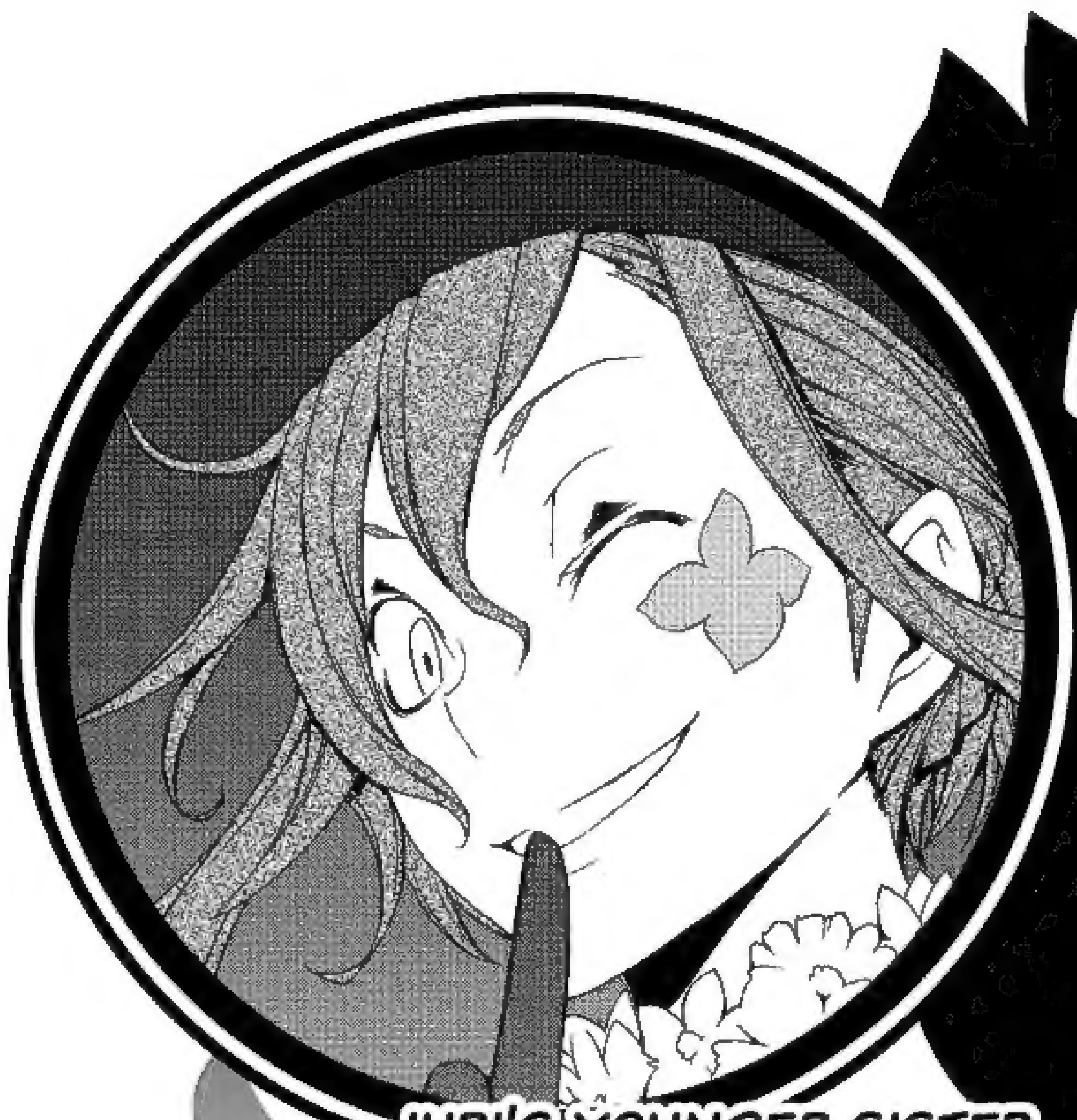
YUHI SHINATSUHIKO

THE DISTRICT MAYOR WHO COORDINATES THE TOWNS. HE IS ALSO A LAND GOD. DEEP DOWN, HE IS A PERVERTED OLD MAN.



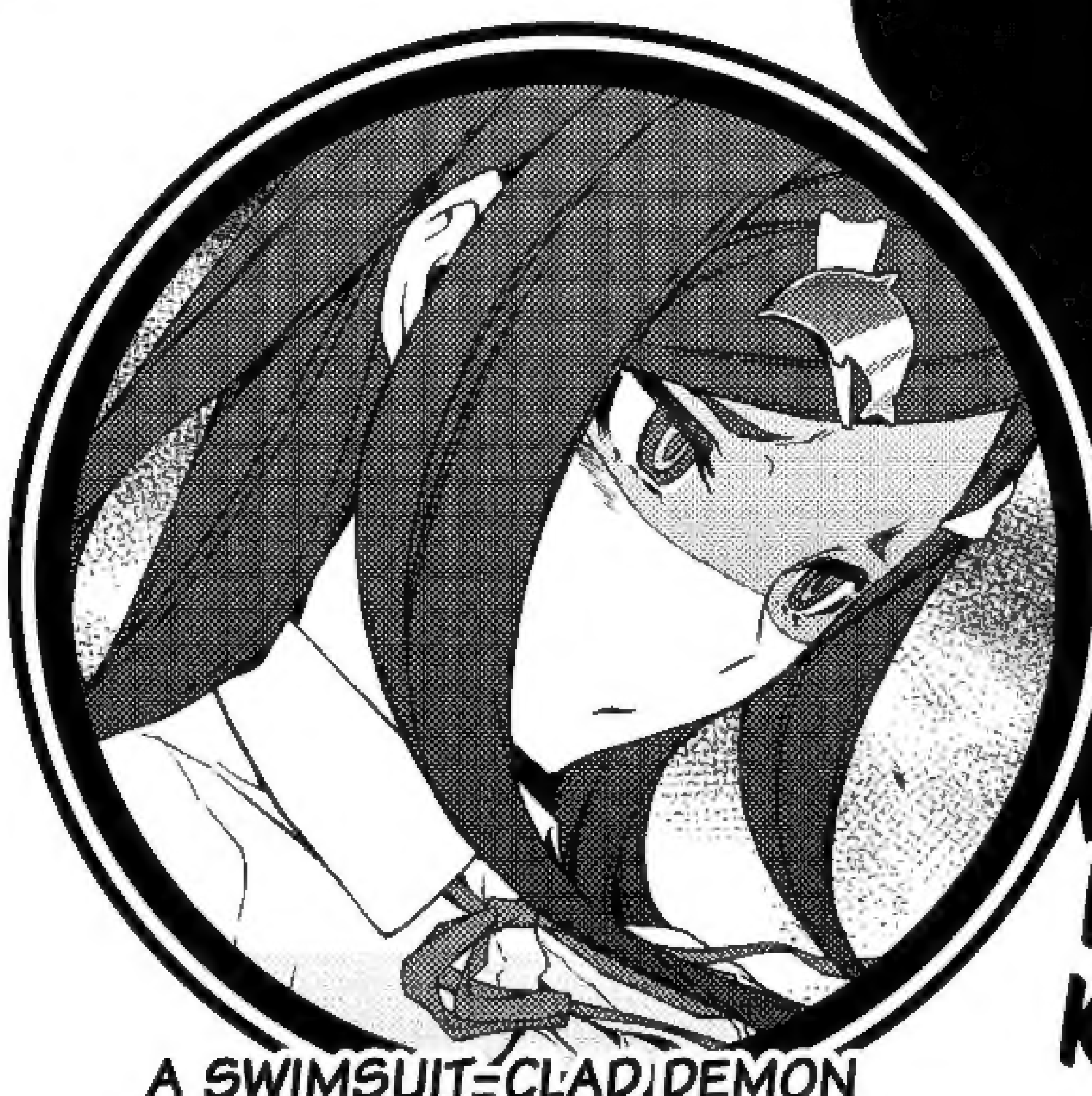
MARIABELL

YUHI'S SECRETARY. SHE IS ALWAYS ORDERED TO COSPLAY, BUT SHE SEEMS TO ENJOY IT. SHE IS ALSO JURI'S GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.



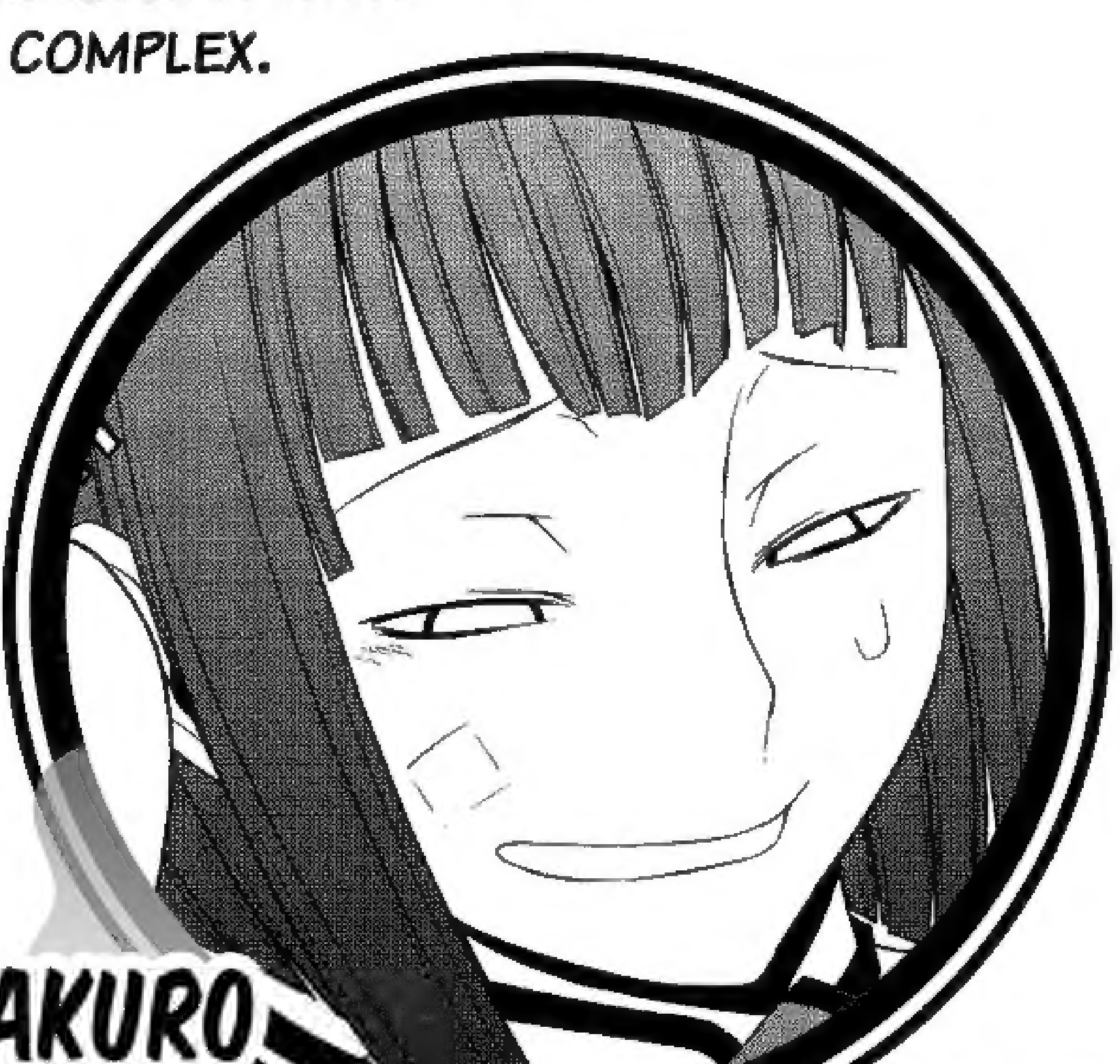
LILA

JURI'S YOUNGER SISTER. A WITCH/MAGICIAN WITH A SISTER COMPLEX.



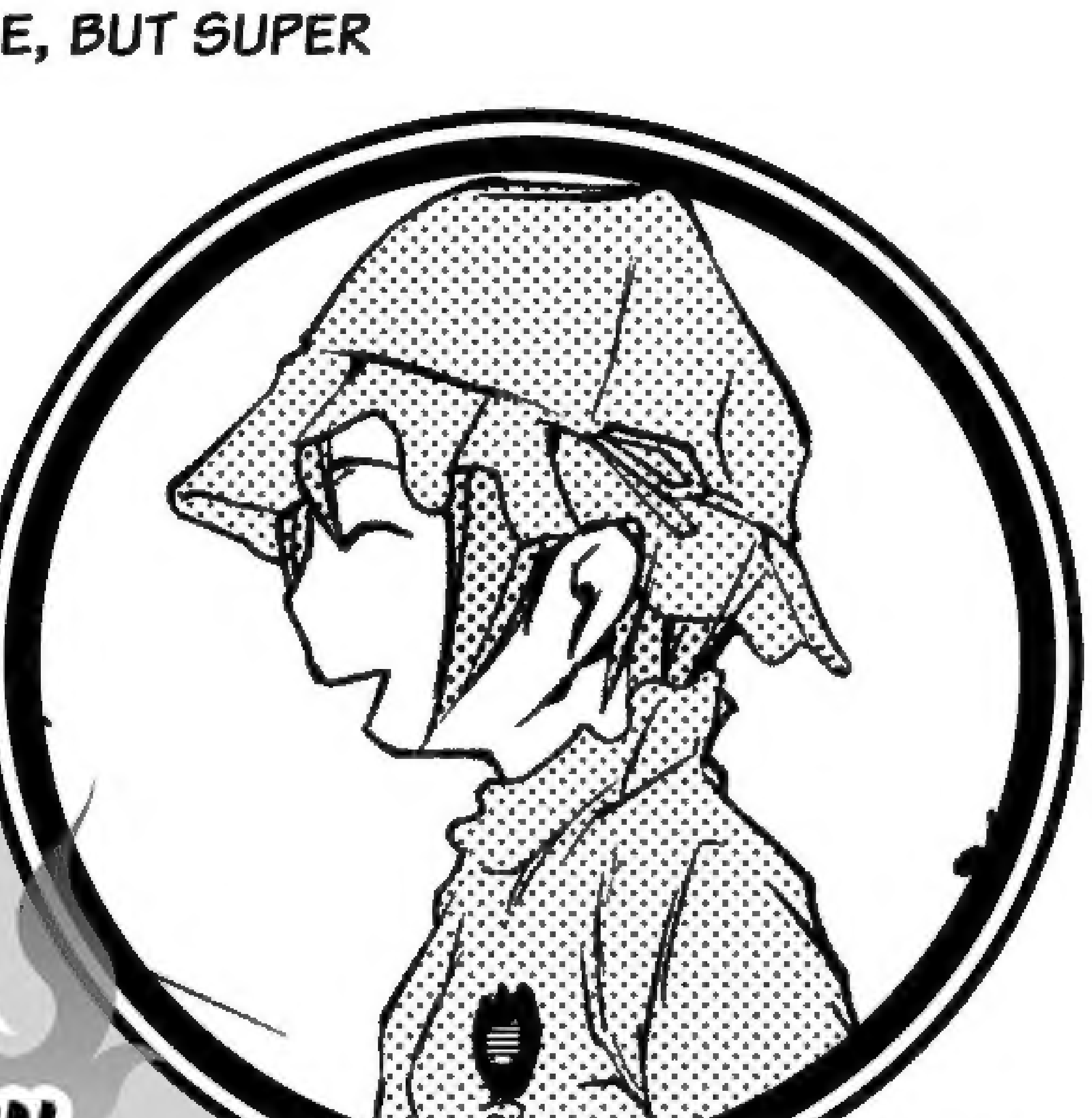
IRUKA KUJOIN

A SWIMSUIT-CLAD DEMON BLADE USER. SORT OF A SPACE CASE, BUT SUPER STRONG.



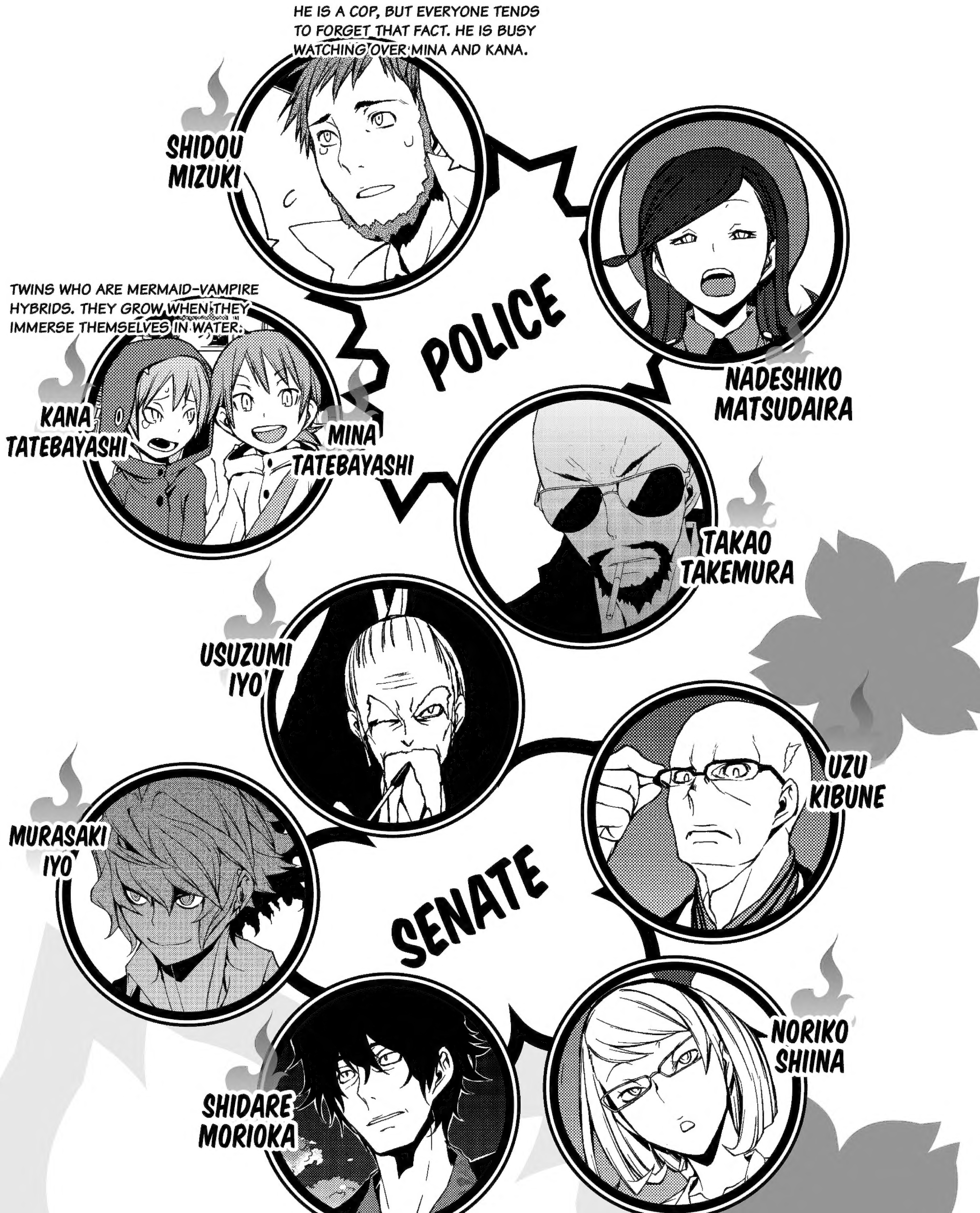
ZAKURO KURUMAKI

RIN'S FORMER MASTER AND A NECROMANCER, SHE ATTACKED SAKURASHIN IN ORDER TO TAKE BACK RIN BUT WAS THWARTED AND REFORMED.



RIN AZUMA

A JIANGSHI WHO WORKS AT A RAMEN RESTAURANT. IT SEEMS LIKE SHE'S ALWAYS SLACKING OFF, BUT SHE'S SURPRISINGLY DILIGENT. WAS KIDNAPPED BUT RETURNED SAFELY.



HE IS A COP, BUT EVERYONE TENDS TO FORGET THAT FACT. HE IS BUSY WATCHING OVER MINA AND KANA.

TWINS WHO ARE MERMAID-VAMPIRE HYBRIDS. THEY GROW WHEN THEY IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN WATER.

SHIDOU MIZUKI
NADESHIKO MATSUDAIRA
POLICE
KANA TATEBAYASHI
MINA TATEBAYASHI
TAKAO TAKEMURA
USUZUMI IYO
UZU KIBUNE
MURASAKI IYO
SENATE
NORIKO SHIINA
SHIDARE MORIOKA

OUTLINE

JUST AS THINGS RETURN TO NORMAL IN SAKURASHIN FOLLOWING THE YAMABIKO ATTACK, DARK CLOUDS BREW OVER AT THE SENATE...

YOZAKURA QUARTET

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ピ BEEP
ピ BEEP
ピ BEEP
ピ BEEP
I SWEAR, GADGETS THESE DAYS ARE SO COMPLICATED.
DOES NO ONE SEE THE BEAUTY IN SIMPLICITY ANYMORE?
ピピ BEEP
AUGUST
Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat
AUGUST...
OCTOBER IS ONLY...
...TWO MONTHS AWAY.
THINGS ARE BEING SET IN MOTION...

#93 PAST AND PRESENT (PART ONE)

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

DAMN IT!
BAM
YOU'RE GONNA BREAK SOMETHING, KYO-CHAN.
OH... SORRY.
SMILE! SMILE!
ブゥン…
VRUM
THE SENATE HAS TAKEN OVER NATIONAL DEFENSE AND CUT EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.
DID YOU KNOW THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN, NADESHIKO-SAN?
GRIT
THEY'RE NORMALLY HANDS-OFF, BUT THE POLICE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LOWER BRANCH OF THE SENATE.
THEY JUST RE-DECLARED THEIR AUTHORITY.
LOWER BRANCH?
THE SENATE HAS A MUCH LONGER HISTORY THAN THE POLICE DOES.
IT'S TO BE EXPECTED.
THEN THE REASON THEY CUT COMMUNICATIONS IS...
BECAUSE THEY'RE GETTING SERIOUS...
...IN PREPARATION FOR THE MONTH OF GODS.

WHATEVER.
WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT...
...IS THAT "THING" THEY HAD IN THE BASEMENT.
THEY SAID SHIDARE-SAN WOULD EXPLAIN EVERYTHING,
BUT SEEING AS HE'S UP AND DISAPPEARED...
GRUM GRUM
DOOM
!
ACK!
WHA?!
MURASAKI?!

TAKE ME TO THE MAYOR'S HOUSE, PLEASE.
HUH?
I CAN'T SEE!
ROLL
I'M SURE YOU ALL HAVE...
...A LOT OF QUESTIONS.
SHIDARE-SAN HAS...
DISAPPEARED?!
SIP
ずず…

WH-WHY...?
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S AFTER,
BUT WE DO HAVE ONE POTENTIAL LEAD.
FOR A LITTLE WHILE NOW...
...DIRECTOR SHIDARE HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH ENJIN.
?!
THAT EXPLAINS WHY ENJIN WAS ABLE TO USE *ONMYODO*.
WHY WOULD SHIDARE-SAN DO SUCH A THING?
...
IT COULD JUST BE...
...BECAUSE HE'S A SCIENTIST.
IT MAY VERY WELL HAVE BEEN A DEAL IN ORDER TO COLLECT DATA ON ENJIN.
...

WAIT.
HOW DID YOU FIND OUT THEY WERE WORKING TOGETHER?
...
I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE HE'D BE CARELESS ENOUGH TO GET CAUGHT...
RIGHT HERE.
TAP TAP
EVERY MEMBER OF THE SENATE...
...HAS A MICROCHIP IMPLANTED IN THEIR SHOULDER.
IT ACTS AS A GPS, AS WELL AS A HIGH-FIDELITY MICROPHONE.
!
THAT'S HOW YOU FOUND OUT THEY WERE MEETING?
NO.
HE WOULDN'T SLIP UP LIKE THAT.
HUH?
GPS INFO, VOICE RECORDINGS, ALL THE INFO FROM WHEN HE WAS MEETING ENJIN...
...WAS TAMPERED WITH BY DIRECTOR SHIDARE...
...TO MAKE IT APPEAR AS IF HE'D NEVER LEFT HIS ROOM.

HOWEVER, A STAFF MEMBER MANAGED TO CRACK THE HEAVILY PROTECTED DATA AND RESTORE THE DATA TO ITS ORIGINAL STATE.
THAT'S HOW THE ISSUE CAME TO LIGHT.
STAFF MEMBER...
HEY... YOU HAVE ONE IN YOUR SHOULDER, TOO, RIGHT?
DOES THAT MEAN...
...THE SENATE IS LISTENING TO THIS CONVERSATION?
YOU BET WE ARE.
BUT SHOULDN'T YOU BE ABLE TO TRACK SHIDARE-SAN DOWN WITH THOSE CHIPS?
YOU MEAN THIS?
PTT
パチッ
HUH? ERR...
THIS WAS FOUND NEXT TO DIRECTOR SHIDARE'S HOSPITAL BED.
HE DUG IT OUT OF HIS SHOULDER AND LEFT IT THERE.
!

DUG OUT…
EEEK!
うぃー
SO, AS FOR HIS WHEREABOUTS…
パキッ
SNAP
…WE DON'T KNOW.
…
SAY…
THIS WHOLE CONVERSATION IS BEING OVERHEARD BY THE SENATE, RIGHT?
ARE YOU SURE IT'S OKAY IF THEY FIND OUT YOU'RE TELLING US ALL THIS?
OF COURSE.
I WAS TOLD TO INFORM YOU ALL…
…BY MY GRANDFATHER.
!

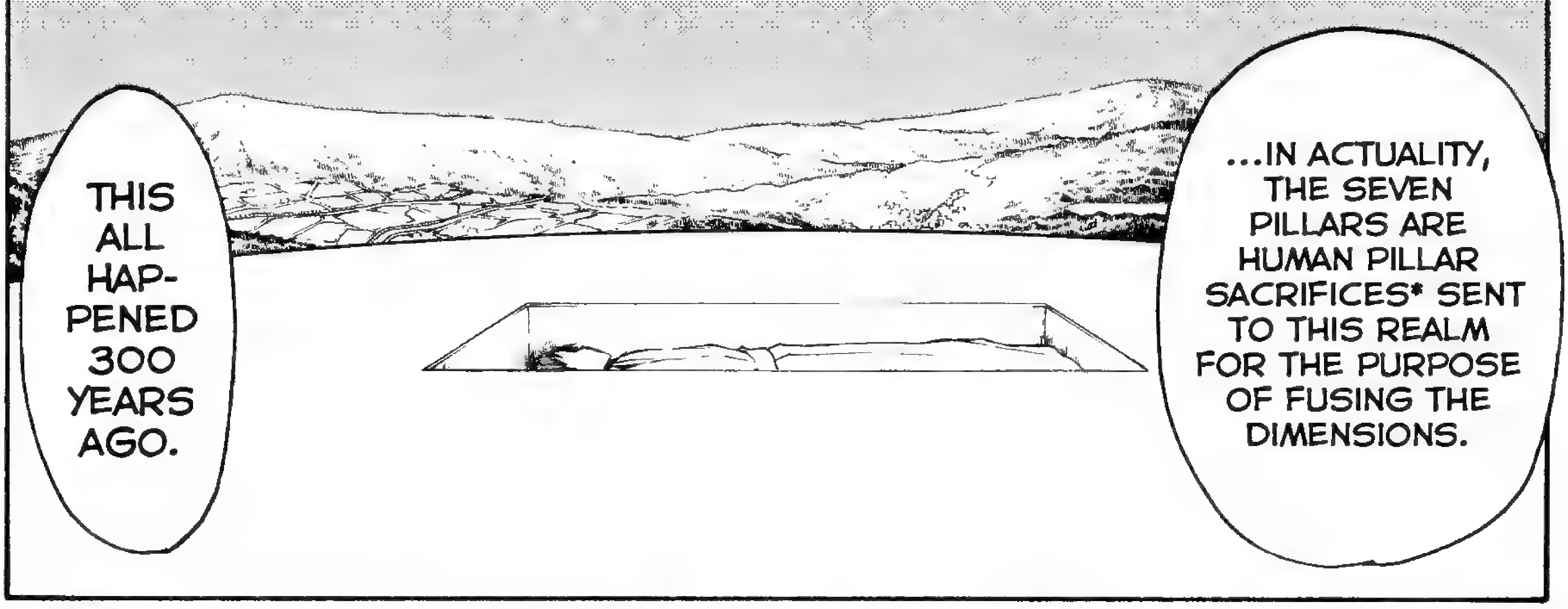
I'M ONLY EXPLAINING WHAT GRANDFATHER PROMISED DIRECTOR SHIDARE WOULD.
WELL, I GUESS SO.
YOU CAME HERE JUST BECAUSE OF A PROMISE?
THAT'S CORRECT.
BREAKING PROMISES GOES AGAINST HIS BELIEFS, I PRESUME.
REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT...
...IT WAS MADE WITH THE GRANDSON OF HIS FORMER FRIEND.
THAT SOUNDS LIKE OLD MAN IYO...
SCRIT
ぽり
SIP
ずず…

WHAT I HAVE TO SAY NEXT,
I WAS TOLD TO SHARE ONLY WITH AKINA HIIZUMI.
TNK とん
!
WHAT?
WHY?
...
WHAT I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU...
...IS A STORY...
...THAT STRETCHES OVER THREE GENERATIONS...
...OF BOTH THE HIIZUMI AND IYO FAMILIES.

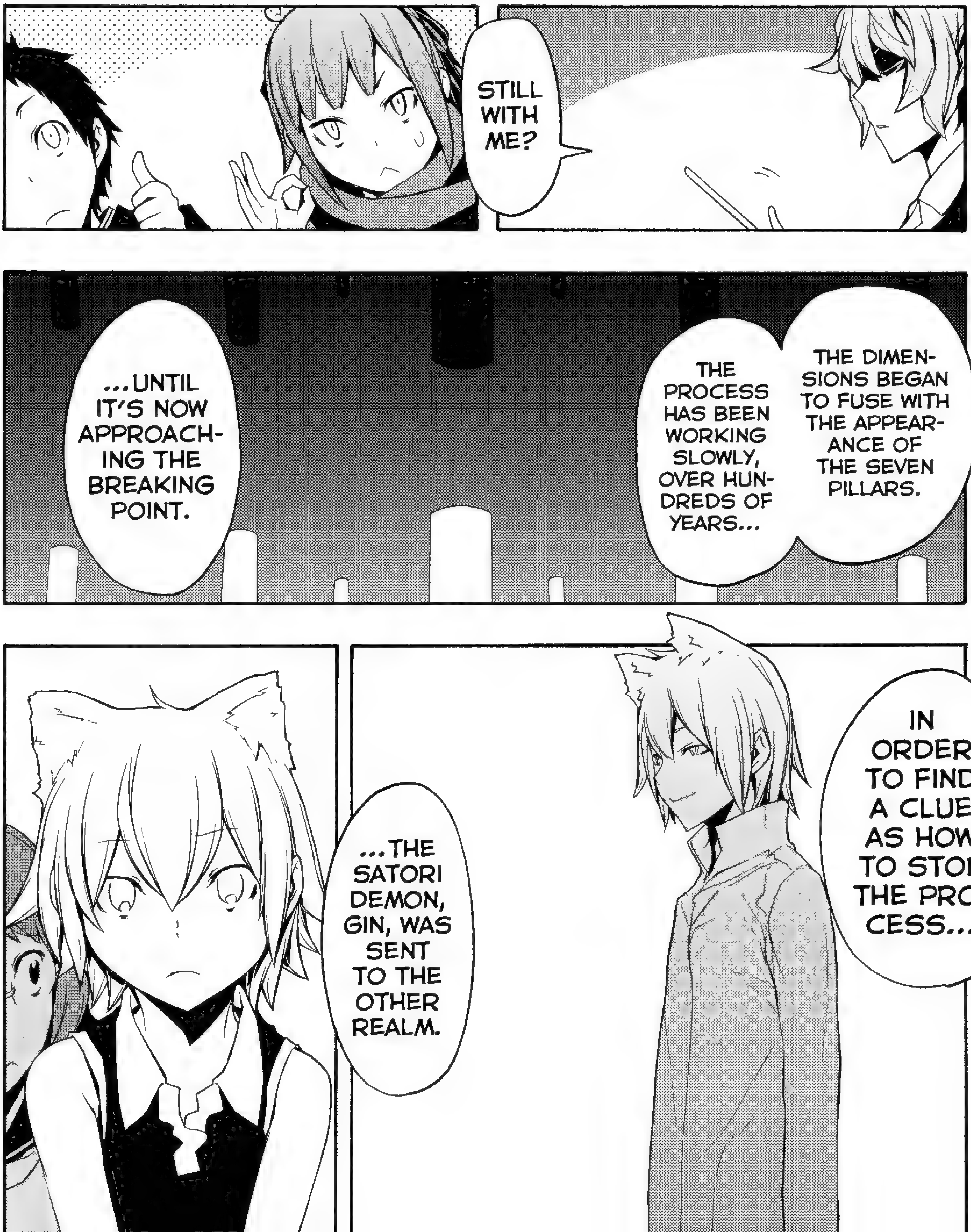
SO, YOU WON'T CONTINUE UNLESS WE LEAVE?
THAT'S CORRECT.
もじもじ
FIDG FIDG
WHO CARES?
YANK
ANYTHING YOU TELL ME NOW, I'LL JUST TELL THE OTHERS LATER.
WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER. THERE'S NO WAY I'D HIDE ANYTHING FROM THEM.
EVEN IF THAT MEANS I WON'T BE ABLE TO TELL YOU?
THAT'S RIGHT!

WELL...
...GRANDFATHER SUSPECTED YOU'D SAY THAT.
ごそごそ
RSTL RSTL
HE READ YOU LIKE A BOOK.
HE SAID TO TELL YOU ANYWAY IN THAT EVENT.
す
SWIF
YOU PROBABLY WANT TO ASK ABOUT WHAT WAS IN THE SENATE'S BASEMENT...
ピッ
BEEP
ジジッ
FZZ
...BUT ALLOW ME TO START FROM THE BEGINNING.
ヒュンッ
VWOON
NOW LOADING........
ABOUT THE ROAD THAT LEADS UP...
...TO THIS OCTOBER.
1750
1800
1850
1900
1950
2000
2005
ザァァァ
ZSHHH

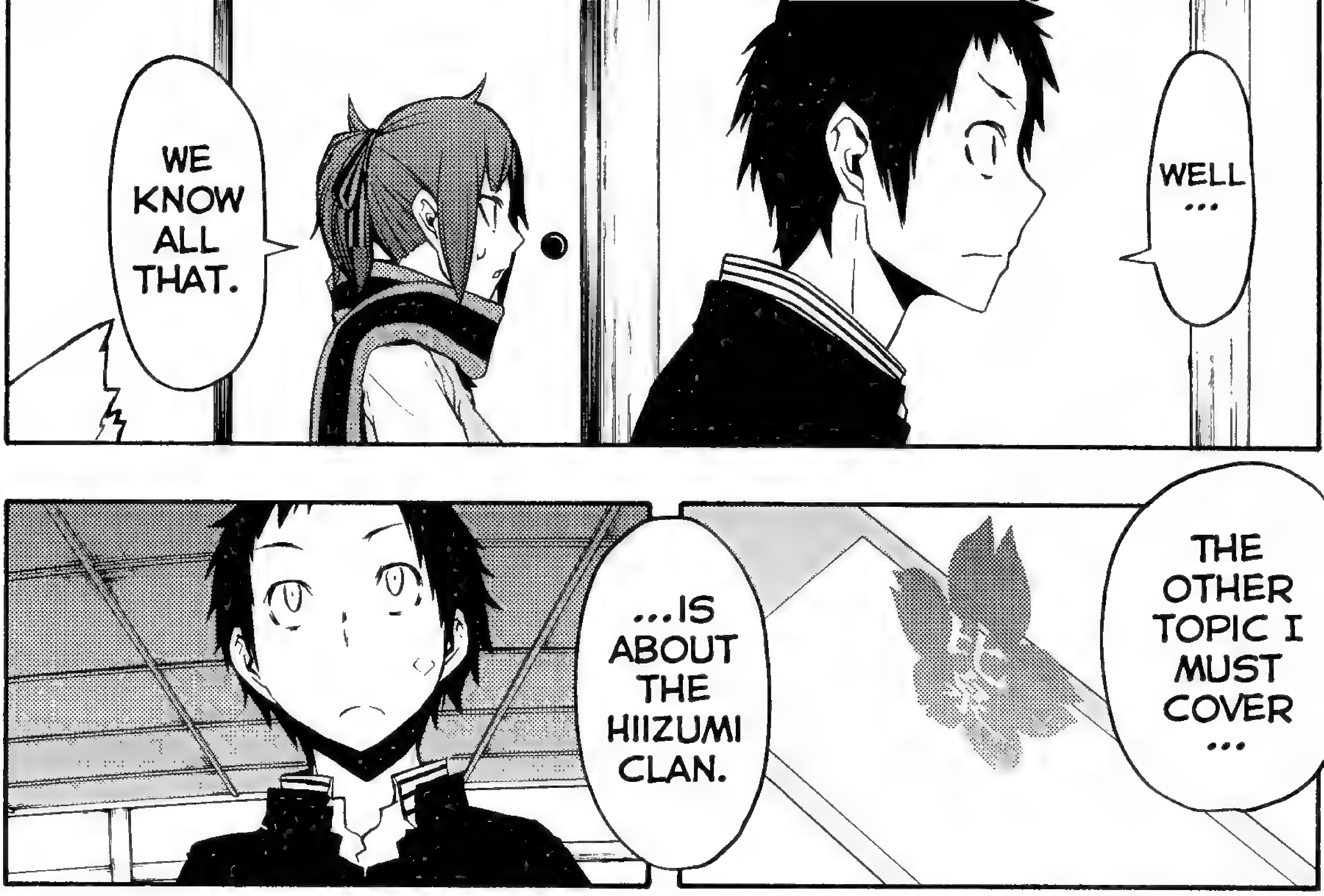
FOR STARTERS, DEMONS ARE NOT OF THIS WORLD.
BY EXISTING IN THIS REALM, THE ORIGINALLY IMMORTAL DEMONS GRADUALLY BEGIN TO SLIP OUT OF SYNC, GO BERSERK, AND EVENTUALLY SUCCUMB TO DEATH.
TO PREVENT THIS, THE HIIZUMI FAMILY BORE THE DUTY OF SENDING DEMONS TO THE OTHER REALM USING TUNING.
「調律」
Tuning
HOWEVER, THE SUCCESS RATE OF TUNING WAS VERY LOW.
IN ORDER TO OVERCOME THIS SITUATION, IT'S SAID THAT ENYOU HIIZUMI VOLUNTEERED HIS BRANCH FAMILY TO BE SENT TO THE OTHER REALM.
BUT IN REALITY, THE SEVEN MEMBERS OF THE BRANCH FAMILY WERE FORCIBLY SENT...
...BY THE HEAD FAMILY'S OSHUU HIIZUMI.
THEN ONE DAY, THE SEVEN PILLARS SUDDENLY APPEARED IN TOWN.
USING THESE AS A GUIDE, THE SUCCESS RATE OF TUNING SKYROCKETED.
HOWEVER...


...IN ACTUALITY, THE SEVEN PILLARS ARE HUMAN PILLAR SACRIFICES* SENT TO THIS REALM FOR THE PURPOSE OF FUSING THE DIMENSIONS.
THIS ALL HAPPENED 300 YEARS AGO.

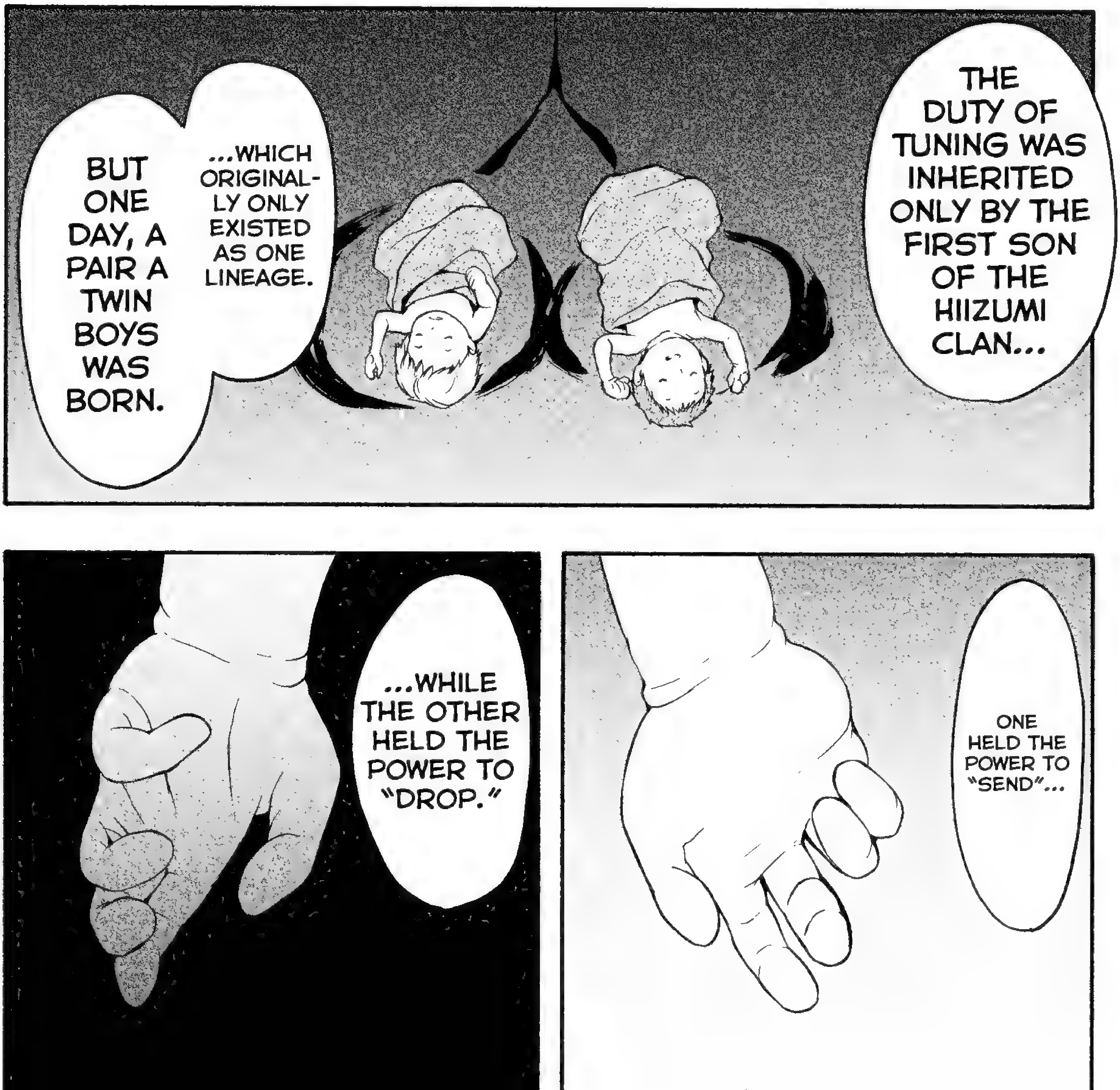
*A type of human sacrifice in which a person is buried alive under or near structures as a prayer to the gods.

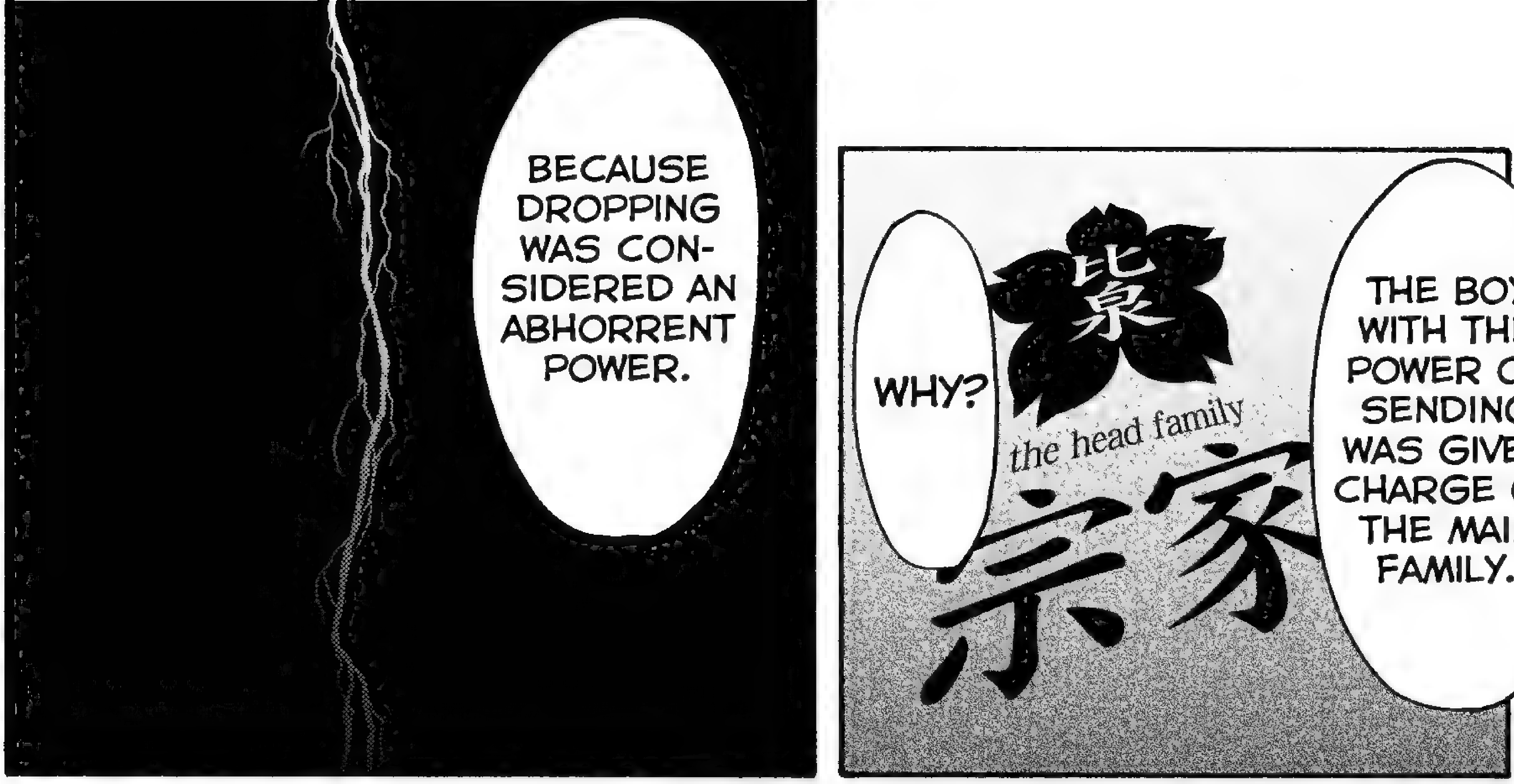

STILL WITH ME?
THE DIMENSIONS BEGAN TO FUSE WITH THE APPEARANCE OF THE SEVEN PILLARS.
THE PROCESS HAS BEEN WORKING SLOWLY, OVER HUNDREDS OF YEARS...
...UNTIL IT'S NOW APPROACHING THE BREAKING POINT.
IN ORDER TO FIND A CLUE AS HOW TO STOP THE PROCESS...
...THE SATORI DEMON, GIN, WAS SENT TO THE OTHER REALM.

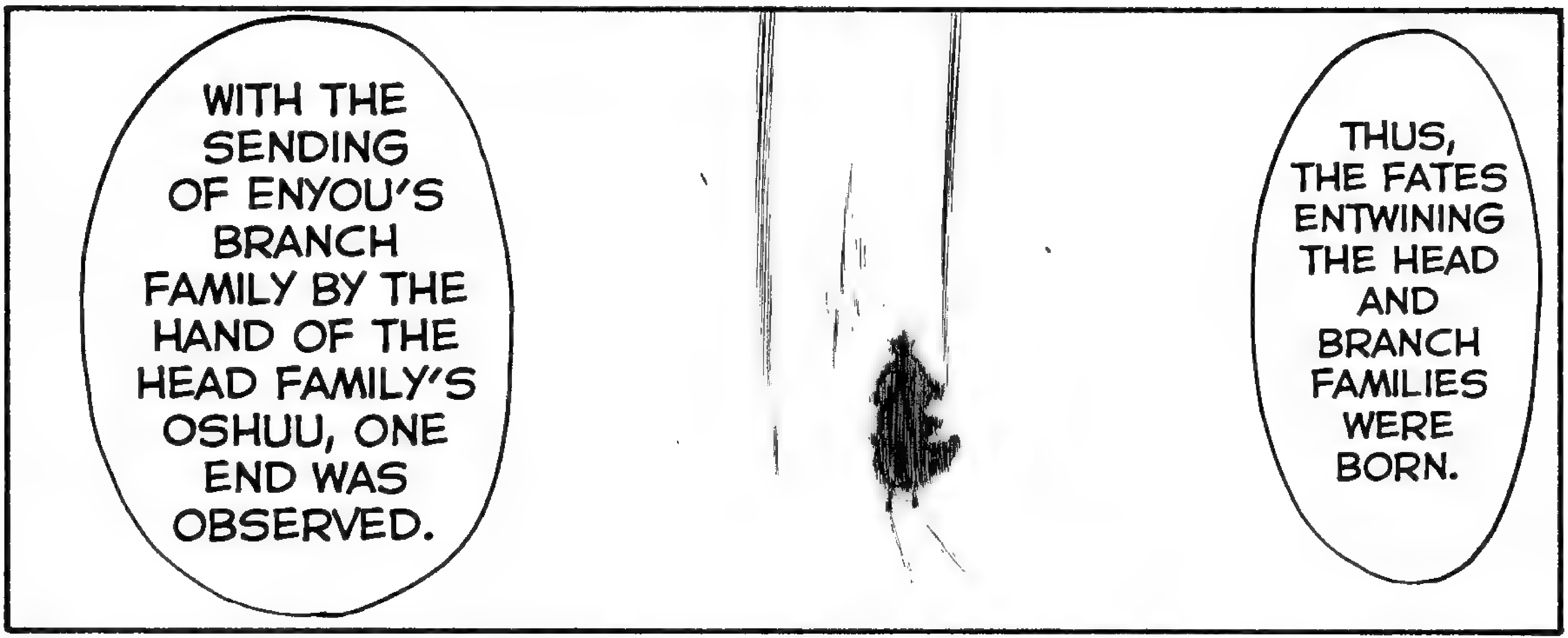
BUT HAVING TAKEN OVER GIN'S BODY, THE ONE TO RETURN TO THIS REALM...
...WAS NONE OTHER THAN THE DESCENDANT OF ENYOU HIIZUMI...
...ENJIN HIIZUMI.
AND NOW WITH HIS SIGHTS SET ON THE MONTH OF GODS, WHEN THE GODS LEAVE THIS TOWN...
「神無月」
Month of Gods
十月
October
...ENJIN HOPES TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF DIMENSIONAL FUSION IN OCTOBER.
THIS IS...
...THE SUMMARY OF EVENTS LEADING TO THIS OCTOBER.
シュウッ...
SWISH


WELL...
WE KNOW ALL THAT.
THE OTHER TOPIC I MUST COVER...
...IS ABOUT THE HIIZUMI CLAN.

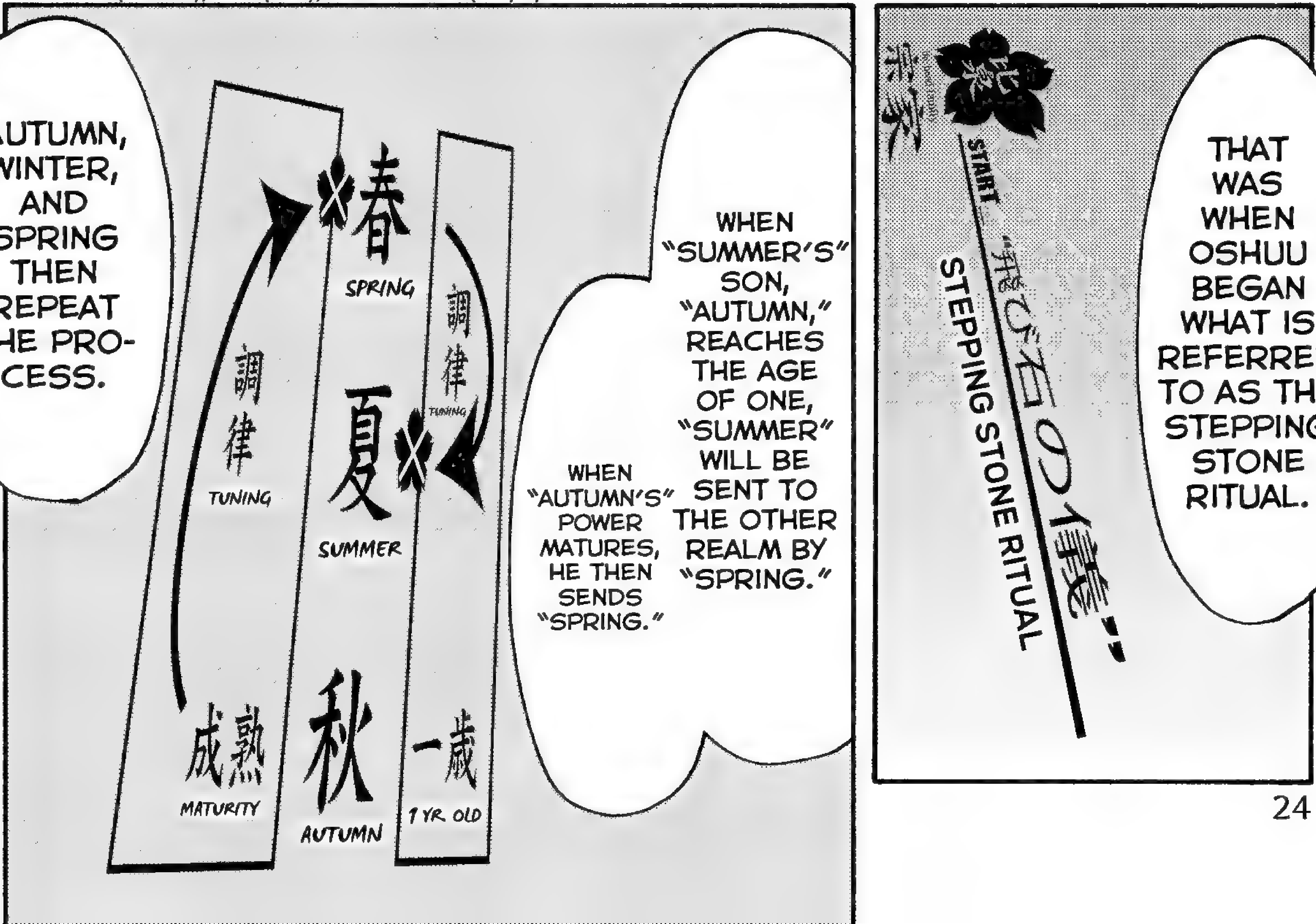
Flower: Hiizumi


THE DUTY OF TUNING WAS INHERITED ONLY BY THE FIRST SON OF THE HIIZUMI CLAN...
...WHICH ORIGINALLY ONLY EXISTED AS ONE LINEAGE.
BUT ONE DAY, A PAIR A TWIN BOYS WAS BORN.
ONE HELD THE POWER TO "SEND"...
...WHILE THE OTHER HELD THE POWER TO "DROP."


THE BOY WITH THE POWER OF SENDING WAS GIVEN CHARGE OF THE MAIN FAMILY.
宗家
the head family
WHY?
BECAUSE DROPPING WAS CONSIDERED AN ABHORRENT POWER.


THUS, THE FATES ENTWINING THE HEAD AND BRANCH FAMILIES WERE BORN.
WITH THE SENDING OF ENYOU'S BRANCH FAMILY BY THE HAND OF THE HEAD FAMILY'S OSHUU, ONE END WAS OBSERVED.

*The naming convention of the head family uses seasons. Spring (Haru), Summer (Natsu), Fall (Aki), and Winter (Fuyu).


THAT WAS WHEN OSHUU BEGAN WHAT IS REFERRED TO AS THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL.
START
飛び石の儀
STEPPING STONE RITUAL
WHEN "SUMMER'S" SON, "AUTUMN," REACHES THE AGE OF ONE, "SUMMER" WILL BE SENT TO THE OTHER REALM BY "SPRING."
WHEN "AUTUMN'S" POWER MATURES, HE THEN SENDS "SPRING."
一歳
1 YR. OLD
調律
TUNING
春
SPRING
夏
SUMMER
秋
AUTUMN
調律
TUNING
成熟
MATURITY
AUTUMN, WINTER, AND SPRING THEN REPEAT THE PROCESS.

PLAGUED BY REMORSE, OSHUU CREATED THIS RITUAL IN AN ATTEMPT TO ATONE FOR HIS SINS.
...
THE OSHUU TOMOE-SAN SHOWED US OF THAT DAY...
WAS HE REALLY REMORSEFUL?

AND THAT IS THE LOST GENERATION.
空白の世代
Lost Generation
SOMETHING WRONG?
NO. PLEASE CONTINUE.
VERY WELL.
ONE OTHER THING I MUST EXPLAIN HAS TO DO WITH THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL.
THE HIIZUMI BEARING THE NAME "NATSU" FOR SUMMER.
MAKIHARU HIIZUMI'S SON, AND AKINA HIIZUMI'S FATHER.
WHEN IT CAME TIME FOR HIM TO BE SENT, OTHER RESIDENTS OF THE SAME GENERATION VOLUNTEERED TO BE SENT WITH HIM...
...HUMANS AND DEMONS ALIKE.
INCLUDING...
...ALL OF YOUR PARENTS.

AS A RESULT, AN ENTIRE GENERATIONAL GAP WAS CREATED IN THIS TOWN.
THAT IS THE LOST GENERATION.
HOWEVER, WE'RE LEFT WITH A CONTRADICTION.
ON THE DAY AKINA HIIZUMI TURNED ONE, HIS FATHER "NATSU" WAS SENT...
...ALONG WITH ALL THE OTHERS.
白の世代
Generation
THAT ALSO GOES... ...FOR YOUR PARENTS, AO NANAMI.
LET ME ASK YOU, HOW FAR APART IN AGE ARE YOU FROM AKINA HIIZUMI?
HUH?
UHH, ONE, TWO... THREE YEARS?
!

UNDERSTAND NOW?
I'M ABOUT A YEAR APART FROM AKINA...
ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF FOR ME, I THINK?
...
IT'S SO SIMPLE.
WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE IT?
CORRECT.
THE CHILDREN OF THE OTHER LOST GENERATION MEMBERS MUST HAVE ALREADY BEEN BORN BY THE TIME THE LOST GENERATION WAS SENT ON AKINA HIIZUMI'S FIRST BIRTHDAY.
AKINA HIIZUMI IS BORN
AGE ONE
AGE THREE
TUNING
AO NANAMI'S PARENTS
LOST GENERATION
CONTRADICTION
AO NANAMI IS BORN
MEANING THE CHILDREN OF THE LOST GENERATION CANNOT BE MORE THAN ONE YEAR APART IN AGE FROM AKINA HIIZUMI.
IT'S TRUE...
THEN HOW COULD THIS BE?
...
SIP
ONE THING I'VE FELT ALL ALONG...
...IS THAT THE CHILDREN OF THE LOST GENERATION...
...SEEM TO HAVE VERY LITTLE INTEREST IN THEIR OWN PARENTS.

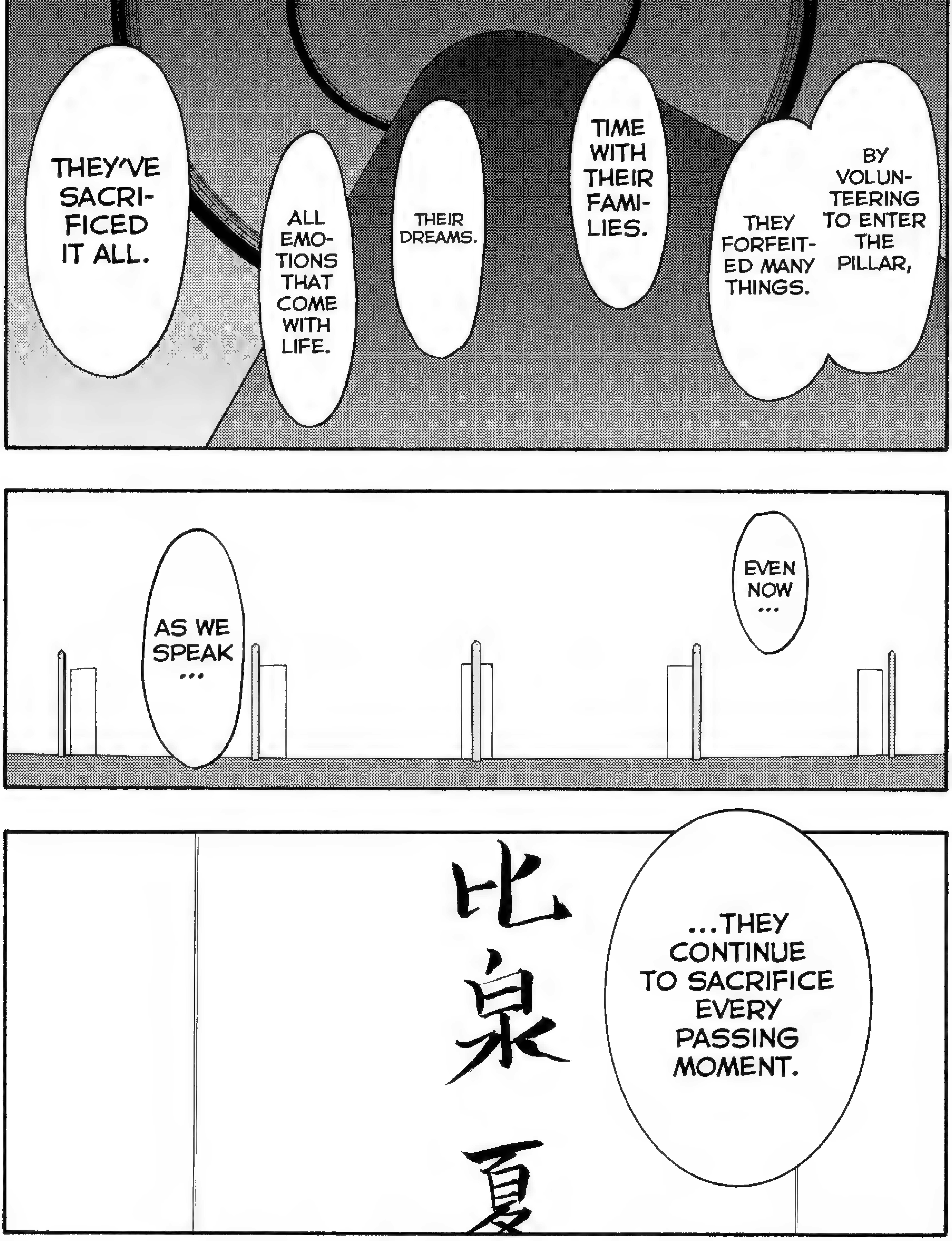
WELL...
WE'RE AWARE.
AND WHY IS THAT?
PROBABLY BECAUSE THE TOWN WORKED TOGETHER TO FILL THE GAP LEFT BY THE LOST GENERATION.
THEY'RE CONCEPTS THAT HAVE ALL BUT BEEN LOST IN MODERN SOCIETY.
THE FRIENDLY LADY NEXT DOOR.
GOSSIPING NEIGHBORHOOD GRANNIES.
THE OLD MAN WHO WILL TELL YOU OFF IF YOU DO SOMETHING BAD.
IT USED TO BE THAT CHILDREN WERE BROUGHT UP BY THEIR COMMUNITY.
FROM THAT CAME THE SAYING,
"EVEN WITHOUT PARENTS, CHILDREN WILL GROW."
THIS TOWN INTENTIONALLY TRIED TO STRENGTHEN THAT IDEA.
THE LOST GENERATION...

ごくっ GULP
THE FACT THAT YOU'RE BRINGING THAT UP NOW...
...MUST MEAN IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO...
...WITH WHAT WAS IN THE SENATE'S BASEMENT, RIGHT?!
TNK とん
VWOM ブゥン
OF COURSE.
IT'S IDENTICAL IN DIAMETER, HEIGHT, AND WEIGHT TO THE SEVEN PILLARS.
THE ONE DIFFERENCE...
GRR ギギ
...IS THAT IT IS A DEVICE...
...THAT IS ENTIRELY MAN-MADE.
SNAP バキッ

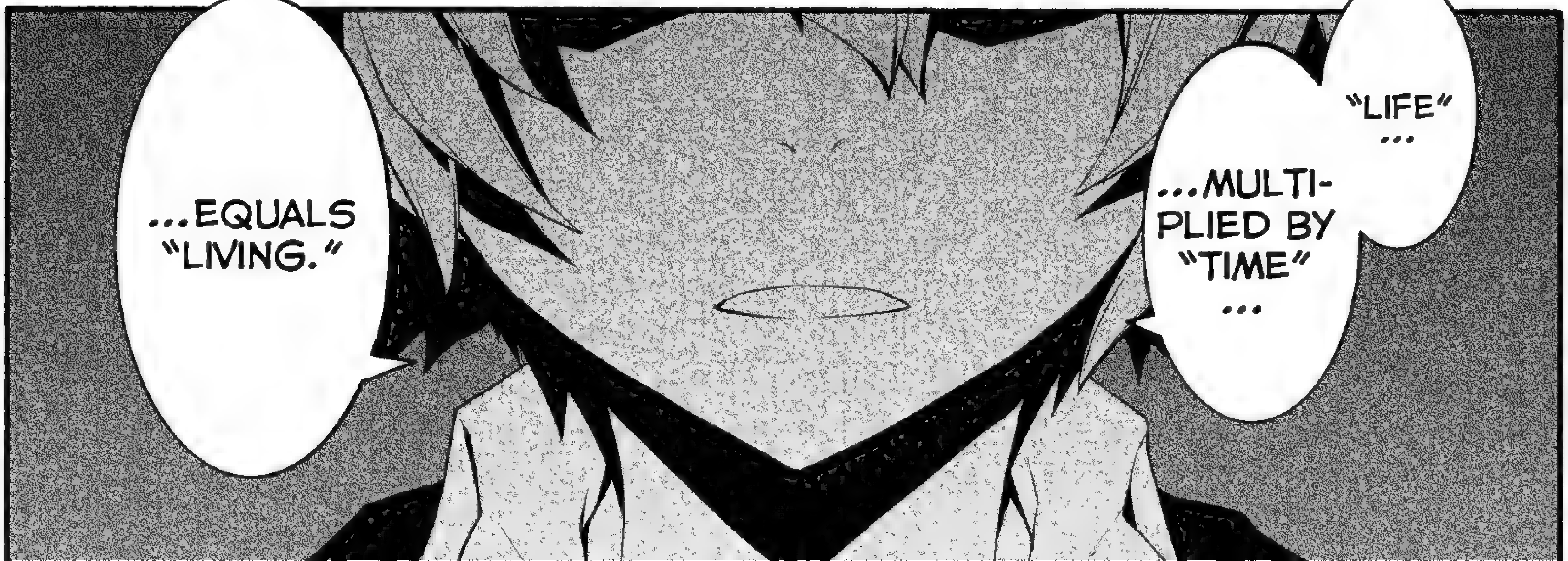
A HUMAN PILLAR SACRIFICE BUILT TO OPPOSE THE SEVEN PILLARS.
OUR ULTIMATE WEAPON, PILLAR ZERO.

PILLAR ZERO... AND...
...HUMAN PILLAR SACRIFICE...
YOU MUST HAVE SEEN THE DOORS ALONG ITS PERIMETER...
...WITH THE NAMES OF THE LOST GENERATION WRITTEN ON THEM.
I DARESAY I NEEDN'T EVEN EXPLAIN.
WITHIN EACH OF THOSE DOORS...
...ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE LOST GENERATION.

CLENCH
HIME…
…I'M OKAY.
I HAD A FEELING THAT WAS PROBABLY THE CASE,
SO I'M FINE…
BY SACRIFICE, DO YOU MEAN THEY'RE ACTING AS AN ENERGY SOURCE LIKE THE OTHER SEVEN PILLARS?
ARE THE PEOPLE INSIDE… DEAD OR ALIVE?
THEY'RE ALIVE.
!
MORE ACCURATELY, THEY'RE "LIVING."
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THE LIVES OF HUMANS AND DEMONS, THEIR LIFE FORCE, HAVE THEIR LIMITATIONS.
PILLAR ZERO
零郷
Energy System ver3.016


BY VOLUNTEERING TO ENTER THE PILLAR,
THEY FORFEITED MANY THINGS.
TIME WITH THEIR FAMILIES.
THEIR DREAMS.
ALL EMOTIONS THAT COME WITH LIFE.
THEY'VE SACRIFICED IT ALL.
EVEN NOW...
AS WE SPEAK...
比泉 夏
...THEY CONTINUE TO SACRIFICE EVERY PASSING MOMENT.

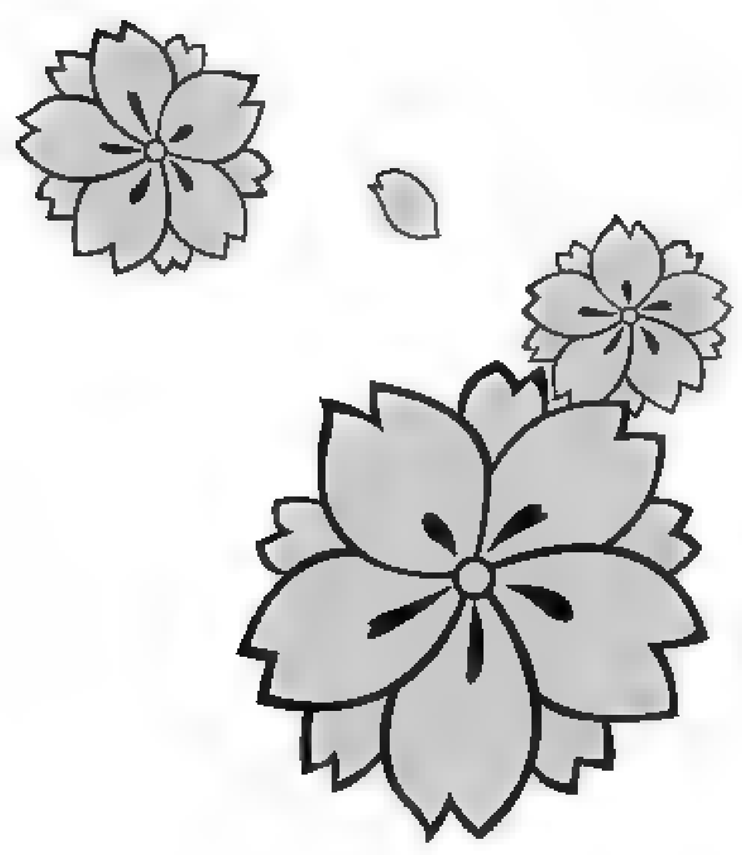
Door: Natsu Hiizumi


“LIFE”...
...MULTIPLIED BY “TIME”...
...EQUALS “LIVING.”

TO THIS DAY,
PILLAR ZERO CONTINUES TO STORE...
...EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THEIR LIVES.

93RD NIGHT PAST AND PRESENT (PART ONE) END

YOZAKURA QUARTET
17



YOZAKURA QUARTET 17

THERE'S NO USE REMINISCING THE PAST.
TIMES CHANGE.
THE YOUNG MOULD THE FUTURE.
WHAT THE ELDERLY MUST NEVER DO...
...IS DENY YOUTH.
I USED TO TELL SHIDARE,
"DON'T CONFUSE YOUTH AND NAIVETY."
BUT PERHAPS NAIVETY IS BUT A PART OF YOUTH.
OR SO...
...SOME MAY HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT OUR GENERATION.
AS WELL AS THE MANY, MANY GENERATIONS THAT CAME BEFORE US...

1638
HMM... MAYBE I'LL TRY BEING MAYOR WHEN I GROW UP, THEN.
OH? SURE, WHY NOT?
I'M GONNA BE MAYOR!
...HM.
THE BLOOD OF DRAGONS, EH? SHE MAY BE WELL-SUITED TO BRING THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN TOGETHER.
YES. I THINK SO, TOO.
PROFESSOR.
SKF

I'VE HEARD YOU WERE A RENOWNED SCHOLAR IN YOUR HOMELAND.
I WAS HOPING THAT I MIGHT ASK FOR YOUR TUTELAGE.
...I DON'T MIND.
THOUGH I SPECIALIZE IN DEMON MEDICINE.
I'M NOT VERY LEARNED IN OTHER FIELDS.
I'D LIKE TO RESEARCH DEMONS.
THE ANTI-DEMON BARRIER THAT HALF-DEMON USED...
WHILE MOST OF IT RELIES ON DEMONIC POWER, I BELIEVE THERE MAY BE PARTS WE HUMANS MAY BE ABLE TO SUBSTITUTE OURSELVES.
ALL RIGHT.
I WORK AS A DOCTOR DURING THE DAY, BUT I WILL TEACH YOU IN THE EVENINGS.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
WHAT'LL YOU DO ABOUT THE TEMPLE SCHOOL YOU RUN NOW?
CONTINUE IT, OF COURSE.
I MUST PASS MY KNOWLEDGE ONTO THE NEXT GENERATION.

#94 PAST AND PRESENT (PART TWO)

AND TO THE MANY MORE GENERATIONS TO COME...
元老院
SENATE

CHATTER
CHATTER
1882
CHATTER
CHATTER
PHEW, THAT'S BRIGHT.
HARD TO TELL WHETHER IT'S DAY OR NIGHT.
WOWIE
INDEED.
NOW THAT HUMANS HAVE ACQUIRED "LIGHTNING,"
THE TIMES ARE GOING TO CHANGE IN A FLASH.
AND THE SENATE'S RESEARCH WILL MAKE TRACKS...

REALLY?
ICCHAN, LIFE WAS FIRST CREATED FROM AMINO ACIDS AND LIGHTNING.
PROBABLY, ANYWAY.
I WISH YOU'D HAVE SAID, "GOD CREATED LIFE."
BUT THAT AIN'T THE CASE.
WELL, NOW...
...IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR HUMANS TO CREATE "LIFE."
CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, THOUGH.
WHY DON'T YOU PREDICT THE FUTURE?
NO WAY. THAT'S BORING.
IT'S FUN BEING DRAGGED ALONG BY THE SURGES OF TIME.
SOME GOD...
AAH, WHATEVER. LET'S GET SOME DRINKS!
THE CORNER BAR IN JINBO SOUNDS GOOD!

1958
YOU START AT THE SENATE TOMORROW, RIGHT, USUZUMI?
MOVING MUST BE A PAIN SINCE YOU GOT TRANSFERRED.
I CAN PACK MY LIFE IN A BAG. IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST COMMUTE FROM HERE?
YOU KNOW THAT WON'T WORK.
I'M LEAVING THE TOWN IN YOUR HANDS, MACHI.
BE THE MAYOR IT NEEDS.
I KNOW.
YOU, TOO, MAKIHARU.
RUNNING THE OFFICE IS FINE, BUT MAKE SURE YOU GIVE MACHI A HAND.
YUP.
AND JINROKU...
HURRY UP AND MAKE A LIVING OFF OF CERAMICS.
AAH, GET OFF MY BACK!

1982
WELL?
IT'S MOVING ALONG.
WON'T BE MUCH LONGER, I THINK.
I SEE.
I'M CLOSE TO DEVELOPING THE TECHNOLOGY NEEDED...
...TO STOP THE DIMENSIONS FROM FUSING. I CAN FEEL IT.
I WON'T GET MY HOPES UP.
I'LL SHOW YOU THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH SCIENCE.

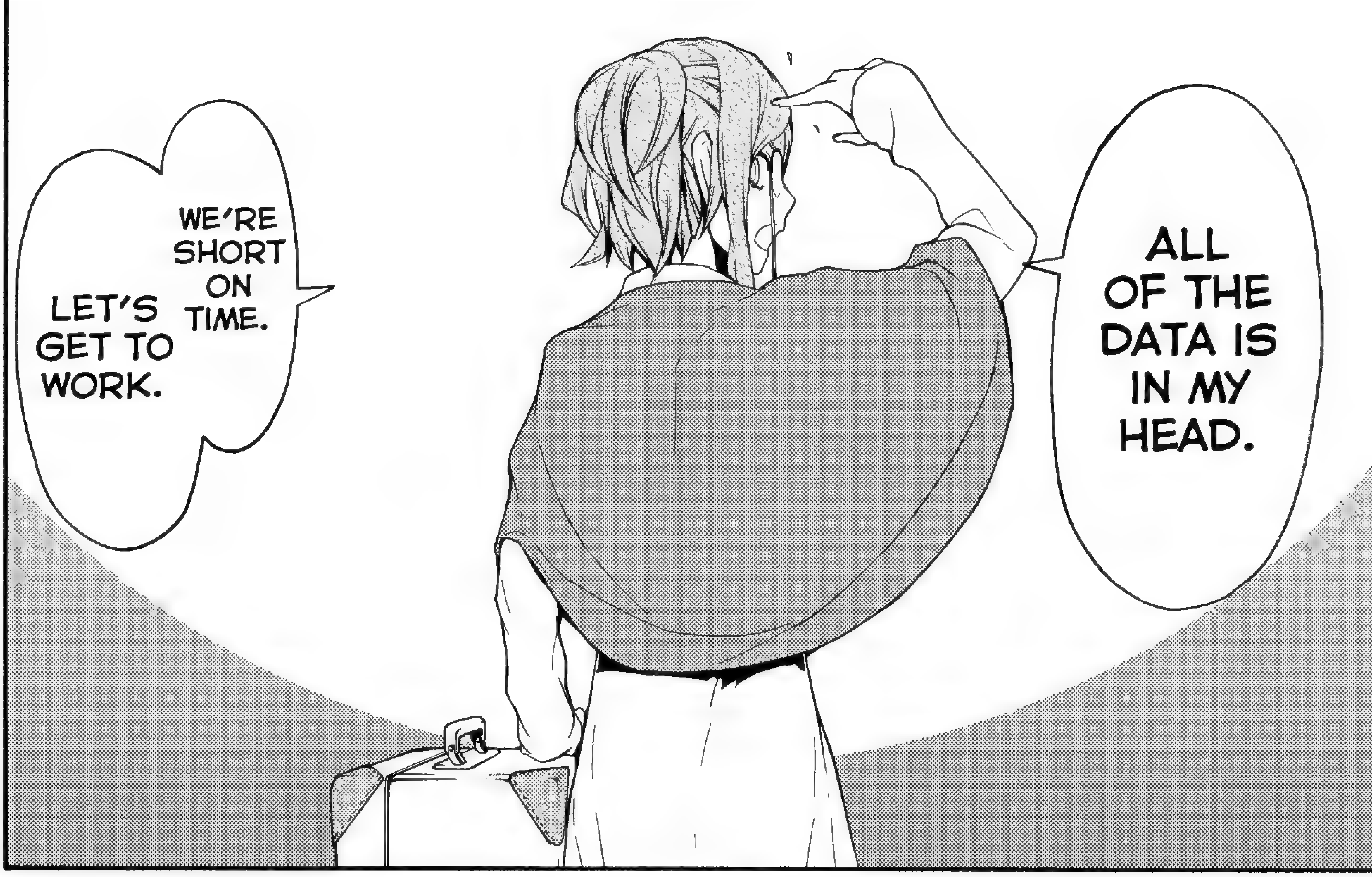
OH, YEAH. I HEAR YOUR SON JOINED THE SENATE, USUZUMI.
THEY SAY HE'S AS BRIGHT AS HIS FATHER.
I'D SAY HE'S DOING VERY WELL,
BUT HE HAS A LONG WAY TO GO.
WHAT ABOUT YOUR SON? IS HE GOING TO JOIN THE OFFICE?
WHO KNOWS?
HE'S AN ALOOF KID, JUST LIKE ME.
THAT'S BECAUSE...
...THAT LUDICROUS STEPPING STONE RITUAL AWAITS HIM.
WHO CAN BLAME HIM?
IT'S NOT LUDICROUS.
IT IS...
パチン
CLICK
I'LL MAKE THIS A PEACEFUL WORLD WHERE THAT RITUAL IS NO LONGER NECESSARY,
USING MANKIND'S KNOWLEDGE.
SO, WAIT JUST A LITTLE LONGER.

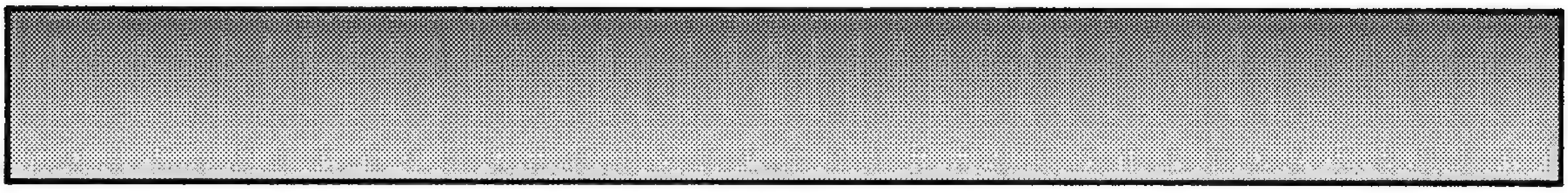
...I WON'T GET MY HOPES UP.
DAMN IT!
SNAP
NO ...
I'M CLOSE, SO CLOSE,
BUT I'M MISSING SOMETHING...
GRIT
SOMETHING ...
THEORY,
DATA ...
AND ...
AND ...

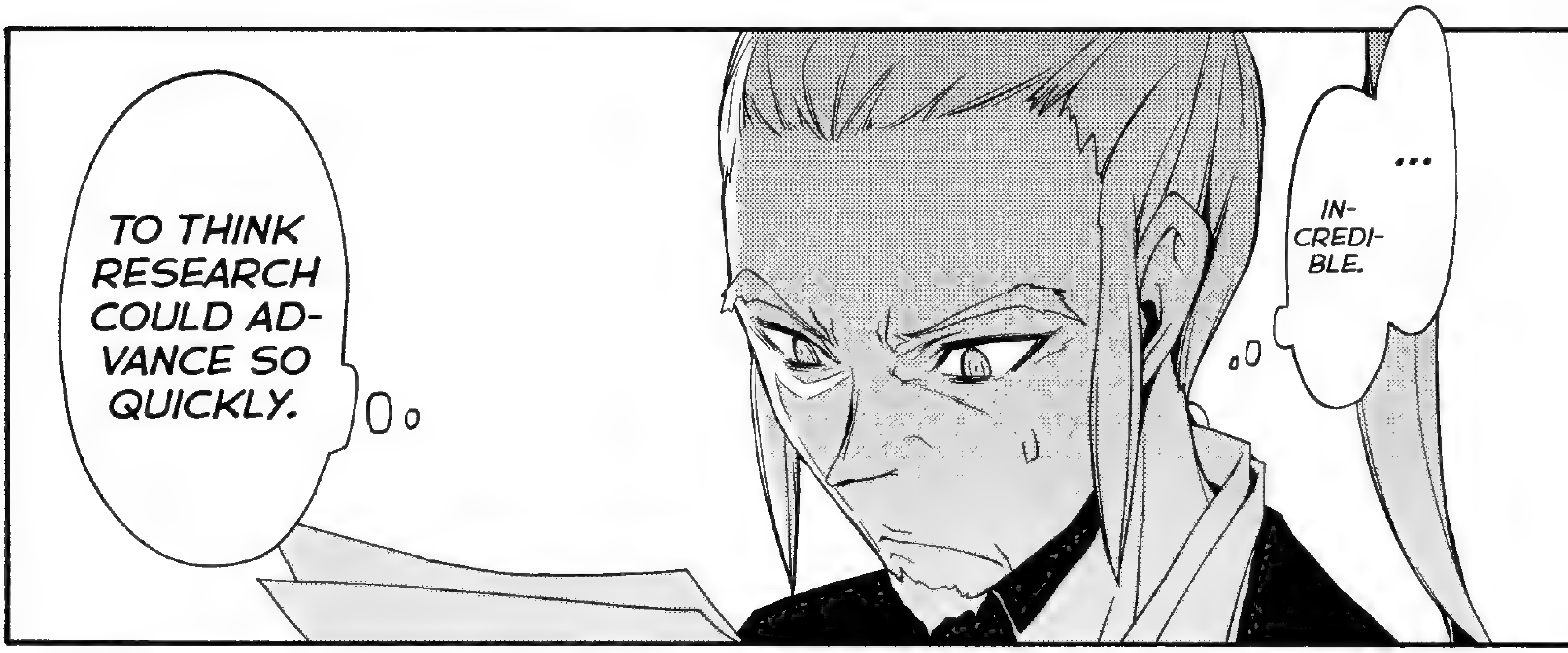
A GANGLY ONE,
AND A BURLY ONE.
THIS YEAR'S RECRUITS ARE RATHER CONTRASTIVE.
A FRIEND OF MINE JOINED A WHILE BACK,
SO I FOLLOWED SUIT.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU. I'M SHIDARE MORIOKA.
MY NAME IS UZU KIBUNE.
I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU.
ガラガラ
RATL RATL
NOW,
WHERE'S THE LAST ONE?
ガタッ
RATL
SORRY I'M LATE.

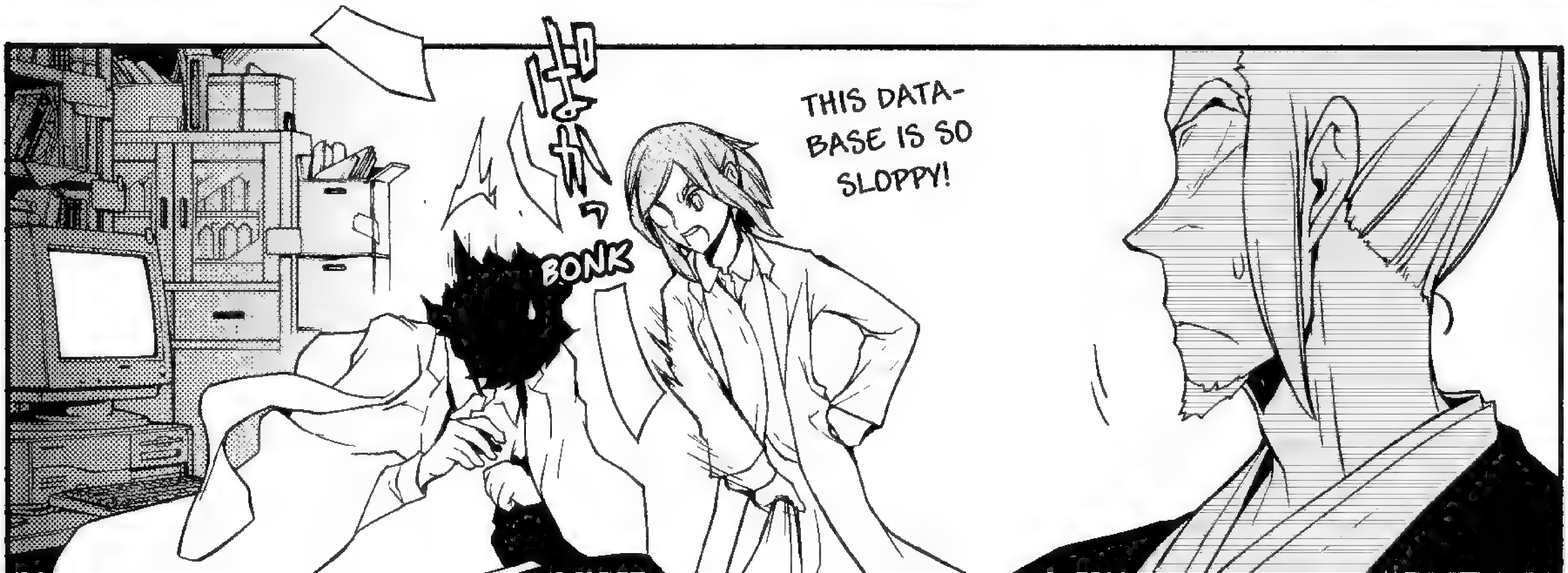
MY NAME IS LUCY LANG MIRA-KLAUS.
I'VE COME FROM THE UK.
I'M A BONA FIDE *KOTODAMA* USER.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
SHE'S SO YOUNG.
HM.
NEED A HAND WITH THOSE?
NO NEED.
FUMP
どさっ
I DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING FROM A FAR EAST LAND...
...WHERE THE CONCEPT OF BEING A GENTLEMAN DOESN'T EXIST.
すっ
SWIF

MARIA-BELL-SAMA.
YOUR FATHER'S EXPLOITS IN THE WORLD OF DEMON MEDICINE ARE IMMEASURABLE.
IT WAS BY READING ONE OF HIS BOOKS THAT I DECIDED TO FOLLOW THIS PATH.
HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR YOUR FATHER'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CREATION OF THE SENATE,
THEN I WOULD NOT BE HERE TODAY.
TH-THANK YOU. YOU'RE TOO KIND.
I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR YOU.
WHAT WE'RE COUNTING ON MOST NOW IS FOR WESTERN THEORY THAT CAN CONTRAST OURS.
OF COURSE.
I'VE BROUGHT PLENTY OF MATERIAL WITH ME.
IS THAT WHAT'S IN THAT SUIT-CASE?
NO.
ALL THAT'S IN HERE IS MY TEA SET.
RATL


ALL OF THE DATA IS IN MY HEAD.
WE'RE SHORT ON TIME.
LET'S GET TO WORK.




... INCREDIBLE.
TO THINK RESEARCH COULD ADVANCE SO QUICKLY.


THIS DATABASE IS SO SLOPPY!
ぽかっ
BONK

THEORY FROM A FOREIGN LAND...
...AND A SINGLE GENIUS.
WITH THIS, PERHAPS...
パサ…
FLAP
THIS IS THE SENATE'S PRIZED LIBRARY.
IT WAS JUST REMODELED.
HMM.
NOT BAD.

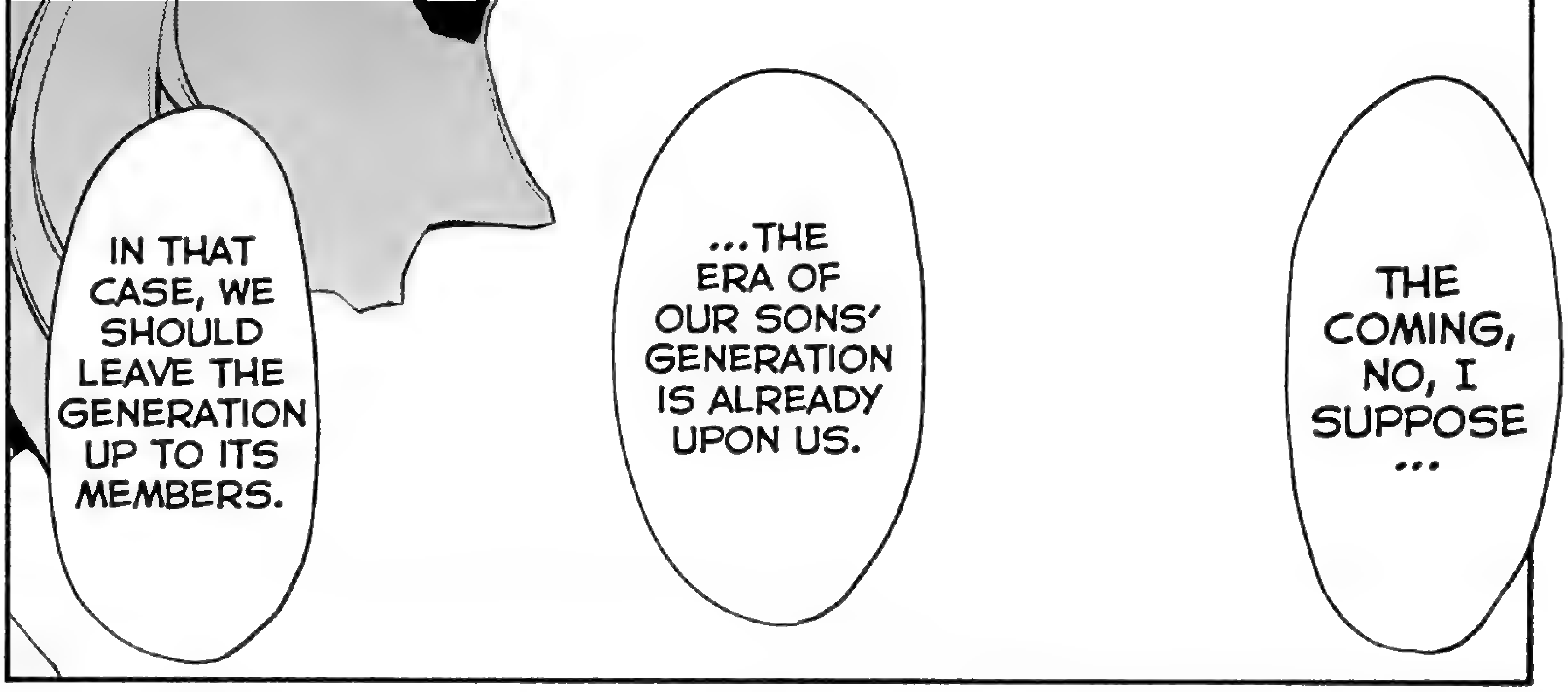
BUT NOT GREAT, EITHER.
HARSH.
CLACK コッ
CLACK コッ
THE JAPANESE SHOULD READ MORE!
THESE BOOKS ARE DEAD.
AGREED.
IT'S FILLED WITH OLD GERMAN FAIRY TALES.
NOW THIS IS AN IMPRESSIVE SHELF.
!
QUITE A COLLECTION THEY'VE GOT HERE.
YOU LIKE... ...MÄRCHEN?!
BEAM
あっ
YEAH.
I PREFER ONES MORE POIGNANT THAN FRENCH FOLK TALES.
LIKE THE BROTHERS GRIMM FIRST EDITION.
EXACTLY! IT GETS MIXED REVIEWS, BUT THE GRIMM BROTHERS' RUSTIC WRITING STYLE IS...
OH! IT'S NOT GRIMM, BUT I ALWAYS KEEP ONE BOOK ON HAND...
ごそごそ
RSTL RSTL
はっ
GASP
ふふ
HEH HEH

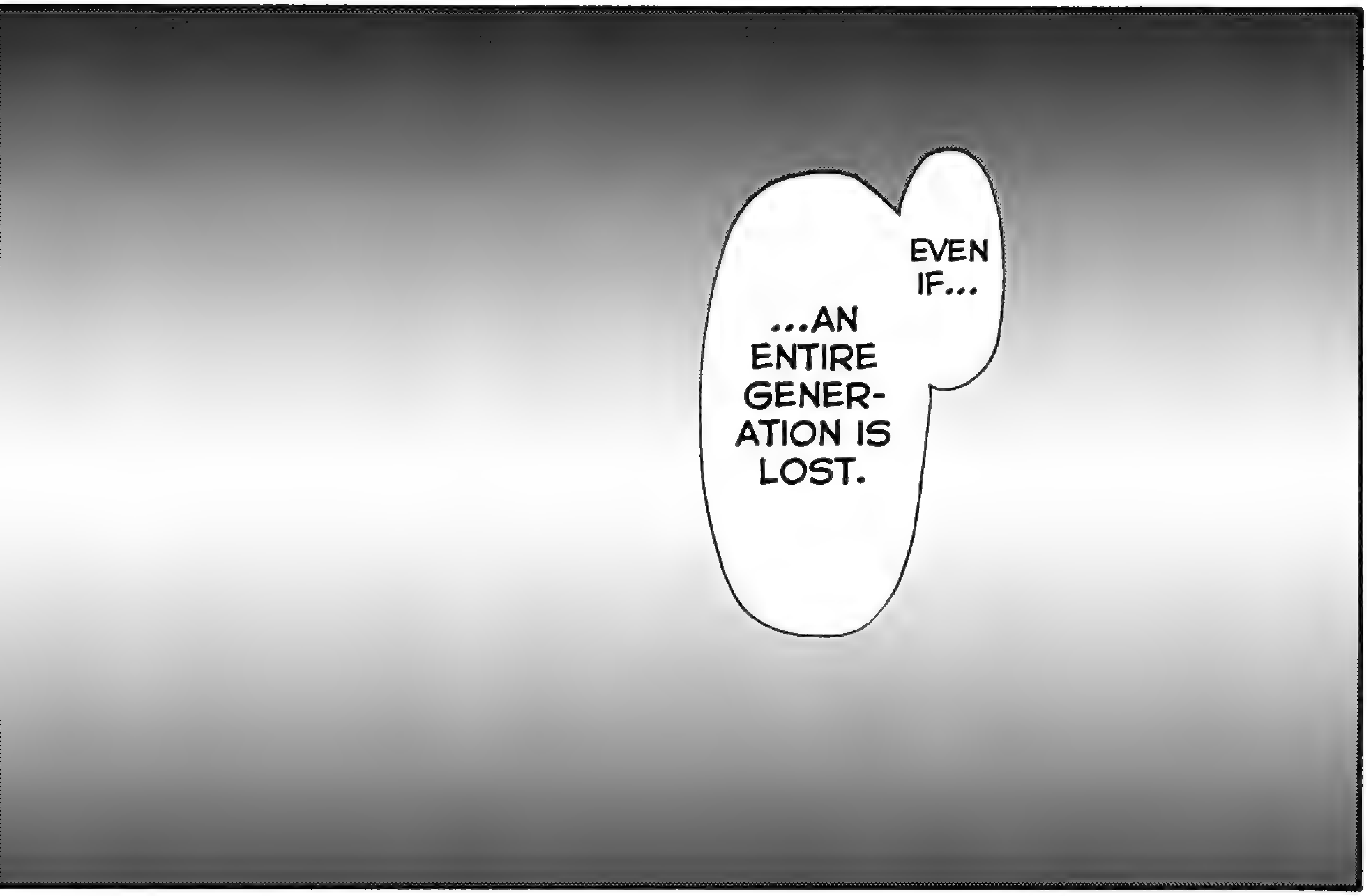
...WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
NOTHING.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN RESEARCH...
...BUT YOU'RE SURPRISINGLY MÄRCHENTIC.
...!
MÄRCHEN IS GERMAN, AND "TIC" IS A SUFFIX FROM ENGLISH, SO MÄRCHENTIC IS A JAPANESE PORTMANTEAU! USE PROPER GRAMMAR!
HERE, I RECOMMEND THIS MÄRCHEN COLLECTION! JUST GIVE IT BACK TO ME IF YOU'VE ALREADY READ IT!
OKAY, OKAY.
I DON'T LEND THESE TO JUST ANYONE, YOU KNOW...
IF OUR RESEARCH CONTINUES AT THIS RATE...
...THEN IT MAY NOT BE JUST A DREAM.
NO, WE'LL COMPLETE IT FOR SURE.
MY LIFE'S WORK...

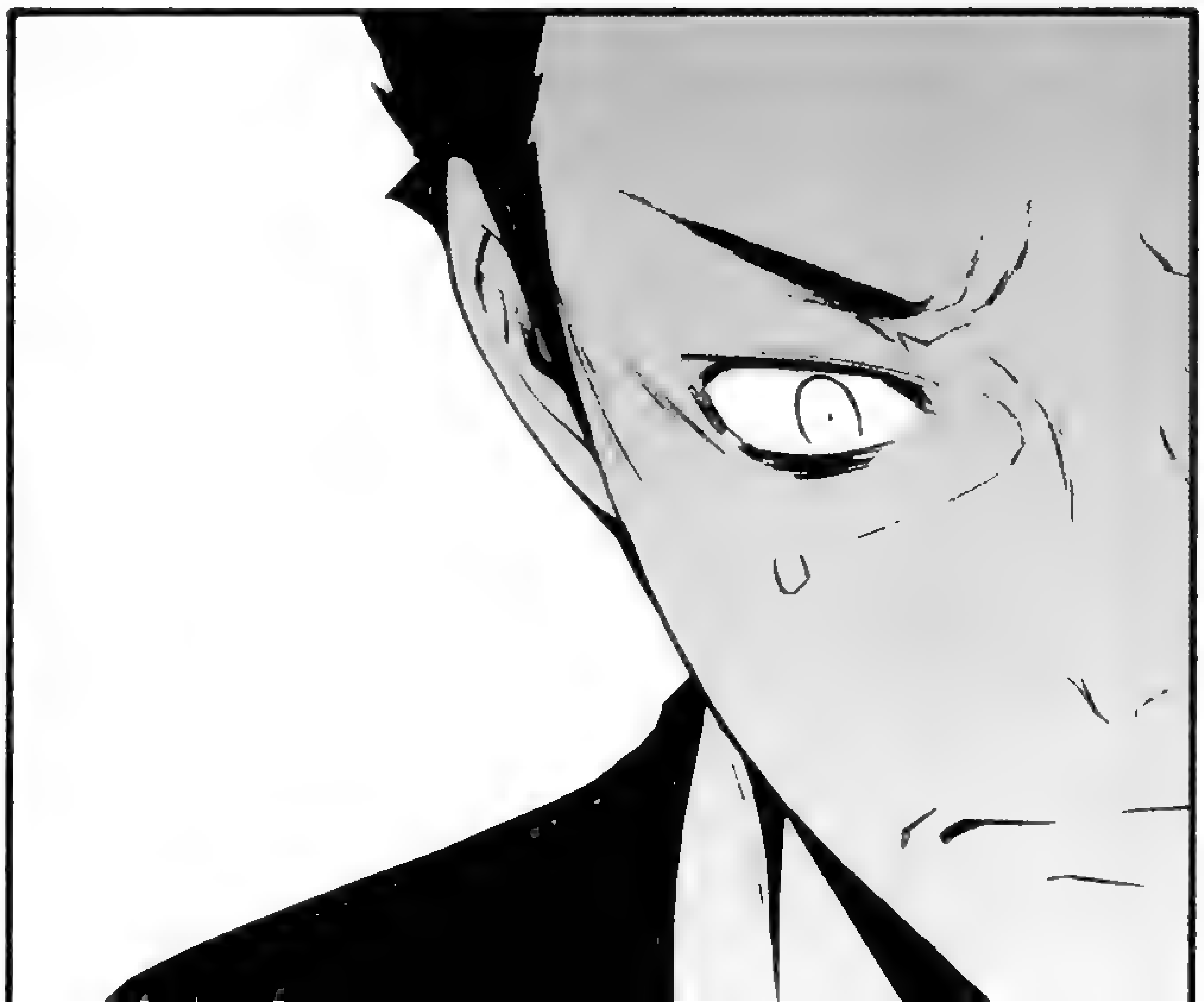
PIL-
LAR
...
...ZERO.

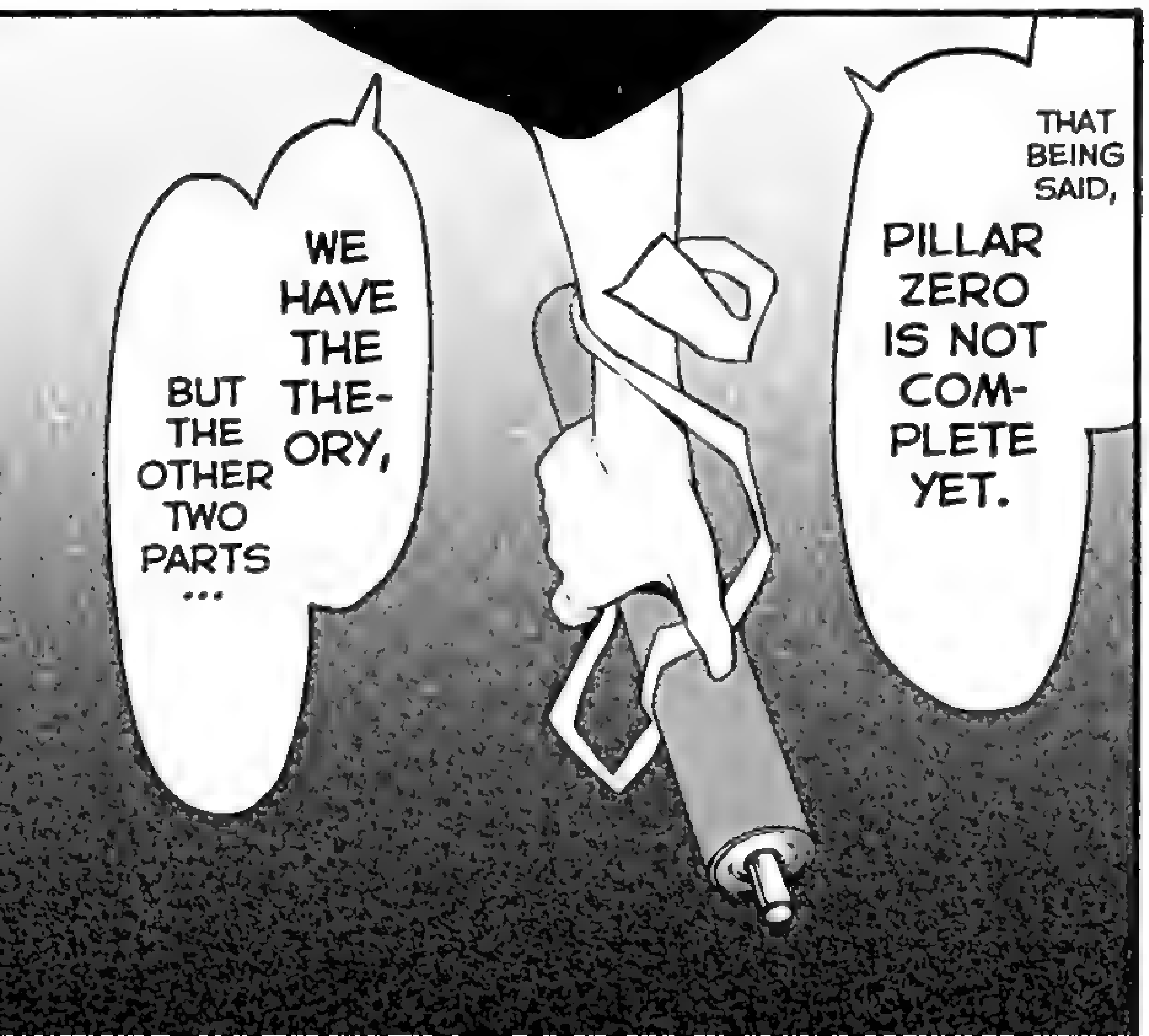
THUD
PILLAR ZERO? WHAT MONSTROSITY HAVE YOU GONE AND MADE?!
AND... IT'S TO SAVE THE WORLD.
...TO PUT AN END... ...TO YOUR RIDICULOUS STEPPING STONE RITUAL.
I'M TRYING TO SAVE YOUR SON, MAKIHARU!

YOU CAN GIVE IT A GRANDIOSE NAME LIKE PILLAR ZERO, BUT IT'S STILL JUST A HUMAN SACRIFICE, RIGHT?!
WHO WOULD CHOOSE TO GO INSIDE THAT?
FWIP
ばっ
MY SONS, FOR ONE.
AND YOURS, MAKIHARU.
HUH?!
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?! DOESN'T THAT DEFEAT THE POINT?
I'VE TOLD THEM THAT, OVER ...
...AND OVER AGAIN.
BUT THEY'RE TOO STUBBORN TO LISTEN.
YOUR SON SAID THAT, RATHER THAN BE FORCED TO PARTAKE IN THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL,
HE WANTS TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE BY HIS OWN WILL.
AND MY SONS AGREED WITH HIM.
SURELY YOU REALIZE, MAKIHARU.
THE STEPPING STONE RITUAL CAN'T STOP THE DIMENSIONS FROM FUSING.
IT'S MERELY PENANCE.
...


THE COMING, NO, I SUPPOSE...
...THE ERA OF OUR SONS' GENERATION IS ALREADY UPON US.
IN THAT CASE, WE SHOULD LEAVE THE GENERATION UP TO ITS MEMBERS.


EVEN IF...
...AN ENTIRE GENERATION IS LOST.




THAT BEING SAID,
PILLAR ZERO IS NOT COMPLETE YET.
WE HAVE THE THEORY,
BUT THE OTHER TWO PARTS...

KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コン
KNOCK
コンッ…
ガラッ
SLIDE
PARDON ME.
HE'S INSIDE.
THANKS…
CLICK
プチ
COME ON IN, UZU.

AREN'T YOU TWO GOING TO GET MARRIED?
HM?
MMM...
EVENTUALLY, I GUESS.
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT AFTER WE FINISH THIS RESEARCH.
ON PILLAR ZERO?
HOW MANY YEARS WILL THAT TAKE?
OH, MY MISTAKE.
I MEANT THIS NEXT EXPERIMENT.
?!
EXPERIMENT?! YOU'RE GOING TO DO A HUMAN TRIAL ON PILLAR ZERO?!
ISN'T THAT WHAT I JUST SAID?
WHEN?!
TOMORROW.
TOMORROW?!
BUT WHO'S GOING TO BE THE TEST SUBJECT?
DON'T TELL ME YOU ARE...
PLEASE.

IF I GO INSIDE, WHO WILL RUN THE EXPERIMENT?
THEN WHO?
零郷試作型壱号機
WE HAVE SOMEONE.
ぺたっ
PLAP
IN ORDER TO GET GOOD DATA, WE NEED A GOOD MEDIUM.
ぺたっ
PLAP
ぺたっ
PLAP
SOMEONE YOUNG AND HEALTHY,
WITH OVERWHELMING DEMONIC POWER.
SOMEONE WITH THE FORTITUDE TO ENDURE THE EXPERIMENT.
WE'RE SHORT ON TIME.
LET'S GET ON WITH THE EXPERIMENT.
PLAP
ぺたっ

Wall: Pillar Zero Prototype #1

ZERO
SHI-DARE.
ONE THING BEFORE WE START.
DON'T OPEN THE DOOR UNTIL YOU THINK IT'S OKAY.
...GOT IT.

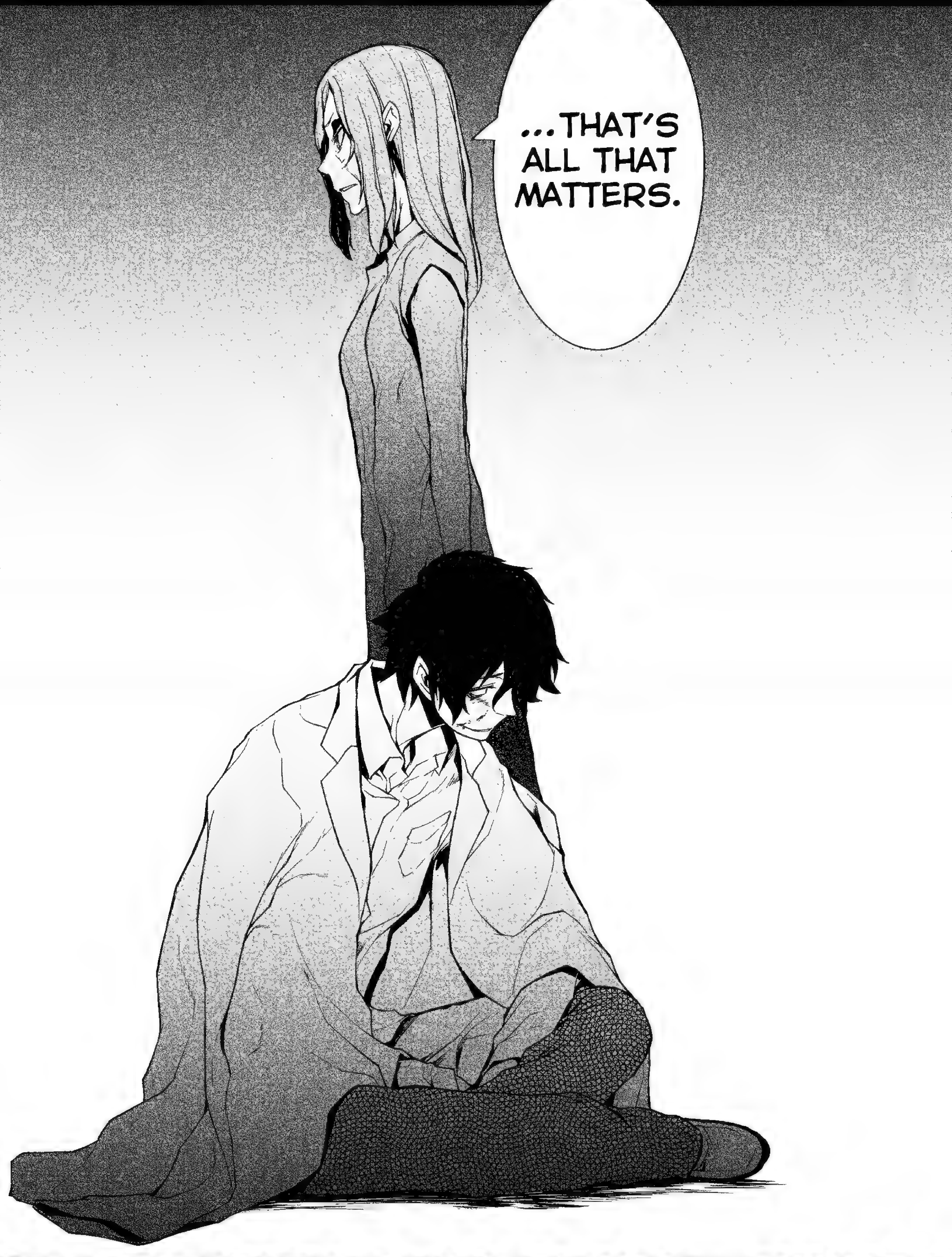
SHIDARE!
ZA
ZA
SHIDARE!
THE EXPERIMENT IS A FAILURE!
OPEN THE DOOR, NOW!
ZA
A FAILURE?
ZA
TAK カタ
TAK カタ
TAK カタ
AS IF.
JUST LOOK AT ALL THIS DATA!
ZA
ZA
EJECT
ZA
THAT'S ENOUGH, SHIDARE!
ZA
ZA
ZA
OPEN IT!
OPEN THE DOOR!

ギィッ
KREE
THOOM
バタン
PLAP
ペタッ
ペタッ
PLAP
ペタッ
PLAP

OH, GOD...
WELL...
HAVEN'T YOU BECOME QUITE THE STUD.

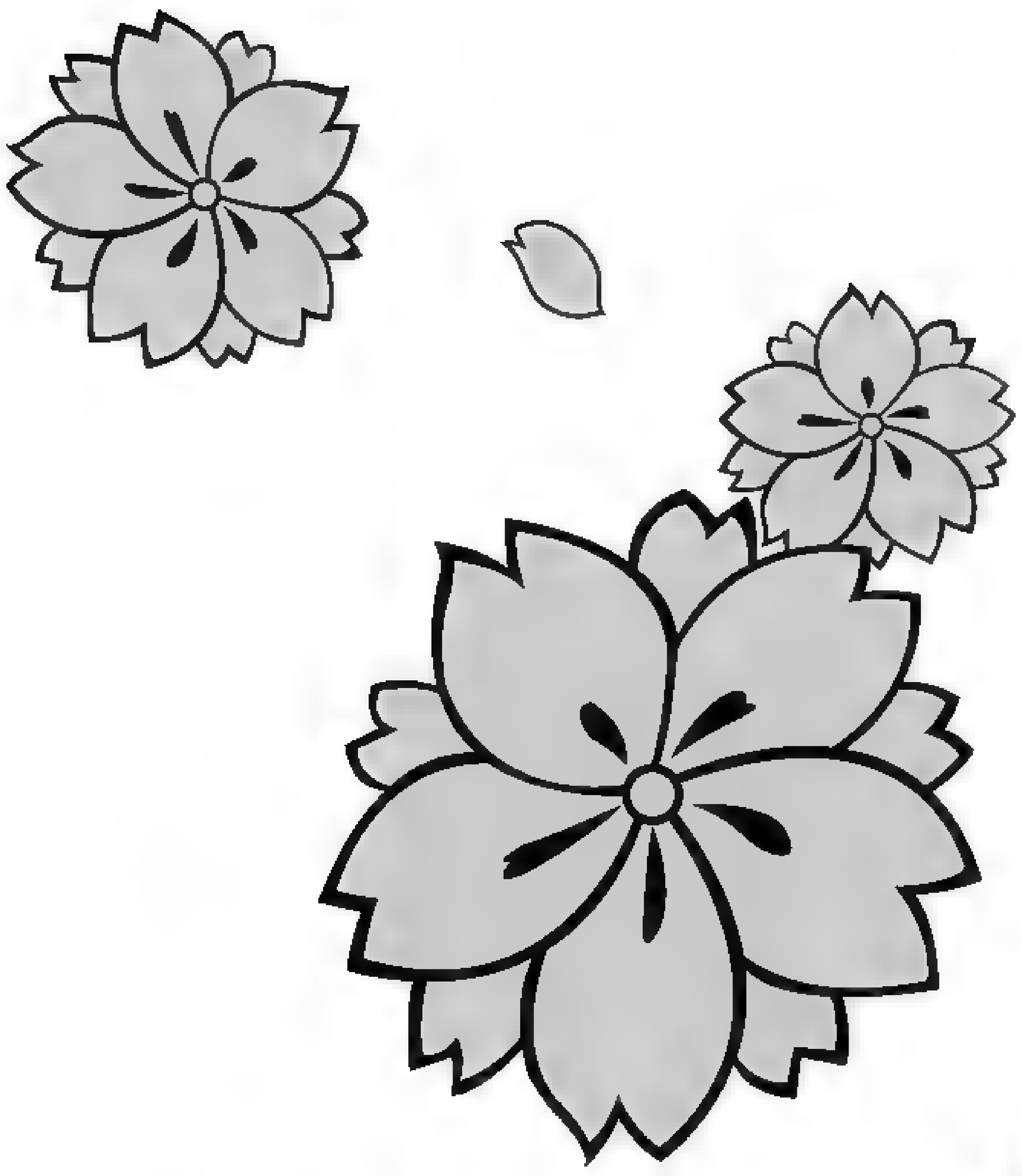
SHI-DARE! YOU...
QUI-ET.
LUCY...
THE ONE WHO OPENED THE DOOR WAS THE REPRESENTATIVE, NOT ME.
YOU TOLD ME NOT TO OPEN IT...
...UNTIL I THOUGHT IT WAS OKAY.
THAT'S WHY...
I...

I HAD...
...NO INTENTION OF OPENING IT UNTIL THE VERY END.
SHIDARE! WHAT HAVE YOU...?
SHIDARE!
AND THE DATA?
...HUH?
DID YOU GET ANY DATA?
...
YEAH. WE GOT INCREDIBLE DATA.
...I SEE.
IN THAT CASE...
ぺたっ
PLAP

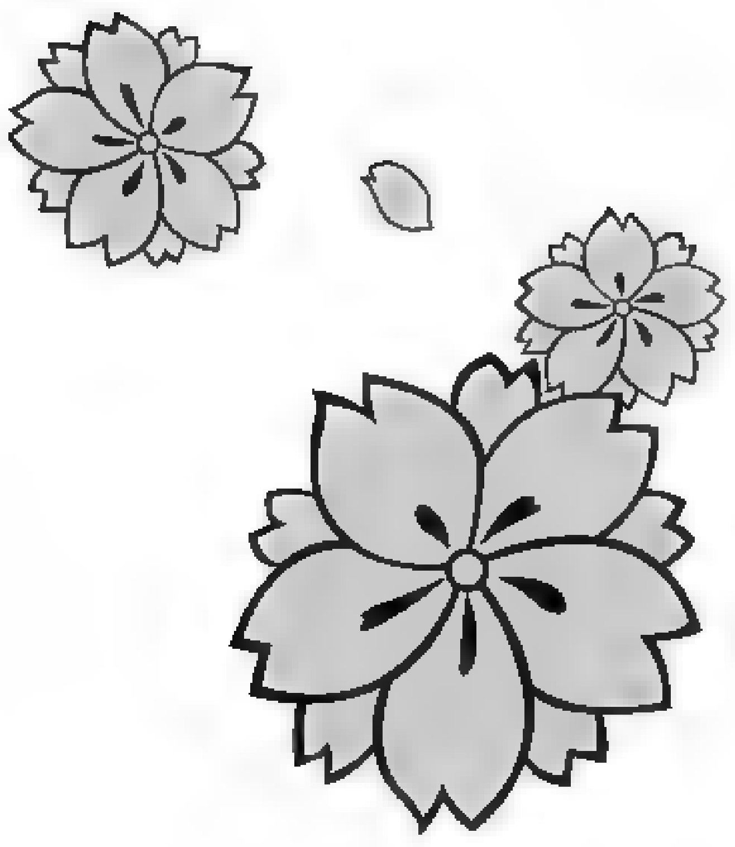

...THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS.

ALL THAT MATTERS? NO PROBLEM?
NO... THAT'S NOT...
IN ORDER TO COMPLETE PILLAR ZERO, WE NEED THEORY, DATA...
...AND LASTLY...
GRIT
...CONVICTION THAT WHAT WE ARE DOING IS RIGHT!
THANK YOU FOR SHOWING ME THE LIGHT.
NOW I, TOO, MUST STEEL MY HEART.

94TH NIGHT PAST AND PRESENT (PART TWO) END



YOZAKURA QUARTET 17



YOZAKURA QUARTET 17

ガタッ
CLUNK
YES, THIS WILL DO.
WELL DONE.
...
THE LIBRARY'S NOT BAD, BUT THE ORGANIZATION IS A MESS.
I'LL TAKE MY TIME MOVING THINGS AROUND.
...
HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO MOPE AROUND?
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT TURNED OUT LIKE THIS...
I'M TIRED OF RESEARCH.
I WANT TO LIVE OUT THE REST OF MY DAYS SURROUNDED BY BOOKS.
SHIDARE SAID...

...ONCE THE EXPERIMENT WAS FINISHED, HE WAS...
HE WAS GOING TO...
...
CLACK
EXCUSE ME.
...HM. THAT'S A GOOD EXPRESSION YOU'RE WEARING.
I SEE YOU'VE FOUND YOUR RESOLVE.
PILLAR ZERO...
...IS SCHEDULED TO BE ACTIVATED TOMORROW.

TOMORROW…
THESE ARE THE PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS THAT SHIDARE DRAFTED UP.
CAN I ASK FOR YOUR FINAL CHECK AND APPROVAL?
…
I SEE MY DATA'S BEEN APPLIED.
…
NO PROBLEMS AS FAR AS I CAN SEE. IT'S A SOLID PLAN.
AS I'D EXPECT FROM HIM.
承認
THUD
APPROVED

#95 PAST AND PRESENT (EPILOGUE)

ぺたん、
PLAP
ぺたん、
PLAP
PLAP
ぺたん…。

...
ONLY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ARE ALLOWED IN HERE ...
カラン
CLACK
...MAKIHARU.
HMM.
THE TRIAL IS TOMORROW,
AND THE ONES ENTERING THIS THING ARE OUR SONS.
I'D SAY THAT MAKES YOU AN OUTSIDER, TOO.
...
I'M NO OUTSIDER.
す、
SWIF
I KNOW.
NEITHER AM I.
ばさっ
FLAP

WE'RE INVOLVING OURSELVES.
SKFF
THEY'RE GONNA BE MIGHTY ANGRY.
SKF
SKF
LET THEM BE ANGRY.
SKF

CLACK
カッン
THEY STILL HAVE A FUTURE.
THERE IS NO ONE MORE SUITED FOR THIS DUTY THAN US.
CLACK
カッン
AGREED.
BUT CAN YOU REALLY OPERATE THIS THING?
WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?
FLIP
MRUP MRUP MRUP
ギュギュギュッ
申
MONKEY
GWOOM

!
FWIP
THIS SHIKI-GAMI ...!
FWOO
ぱ
ヒュッ
SNAP
ト
THUD
トンッ
THUD
どさ
FWUMP
どさっ
FWUMP
PHEW ...
I SWEAR,
I'VE GOT ONE HANDFUL OF AN OLD MAN.
比泉
HIIZUMI
LIKE-WISE.
伊予
IYO

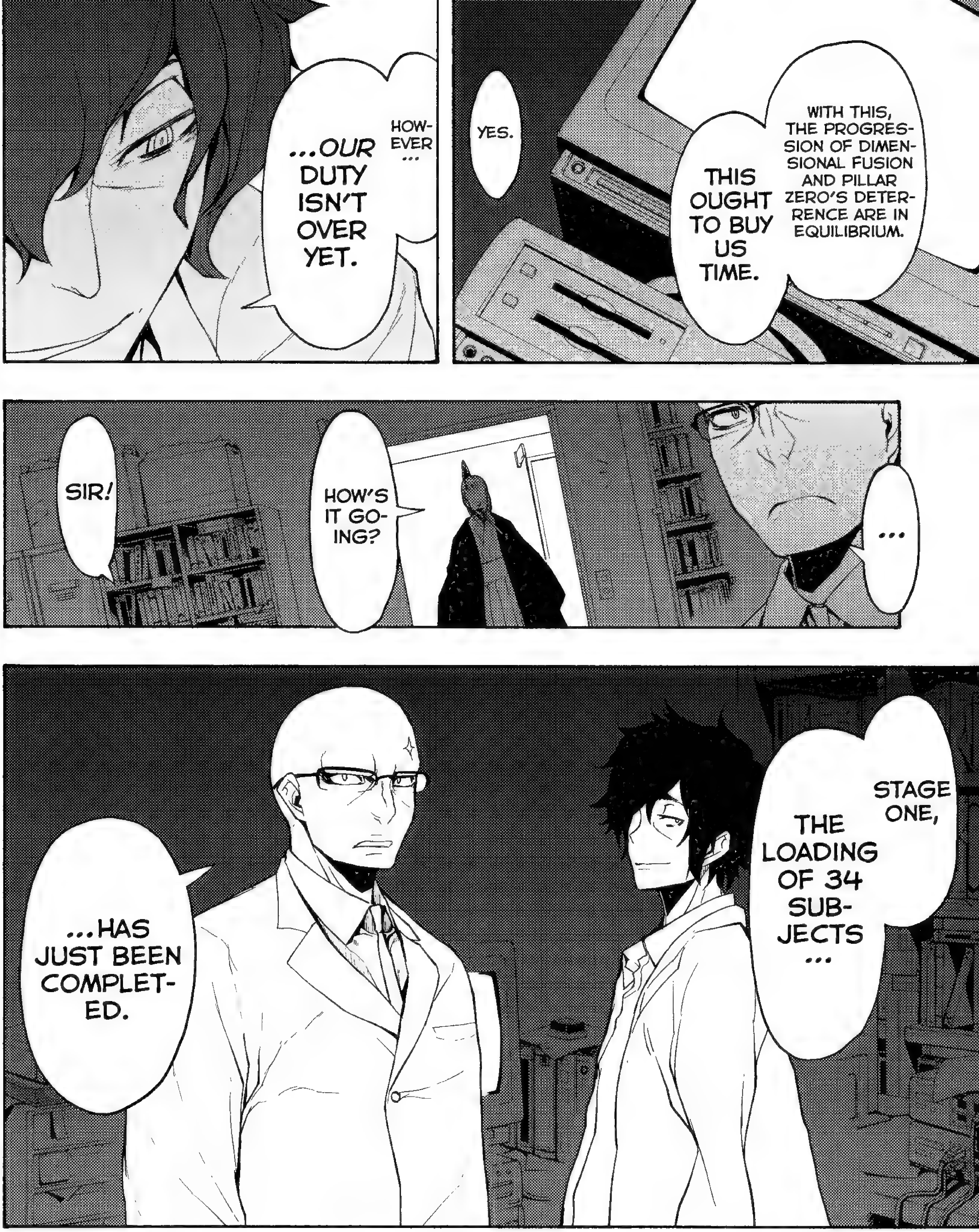
SORRY, SHIDARE, BUT COULD YOU MAKE SURE THESE TWO DON'T WAKE UP UNTIL TOMORROW?
ROGER.
NOT JUST *ANYONE* CAN GO INSIDE THAT THING.
YOU SAID IT.
THERE ARE 36 COFFINS AROUND THE PERIMETER OF PILLAR ZERO.
EVERY PERSON WHO ENTERS THE PILLAR MUST HAVE THEIR LIFE FORCE CAREFULLY ANALYZED AND PLACED ACCORDINGLY SO AS TO MAINTAIN THE EQUILIBRIUM OF POWER.
36
零
PILLAR ZERO
IF THAT BALANCE IS DISRUPTED, PILLAR ZERO WILL GO BERSERK.
COFFIN No. 1-36

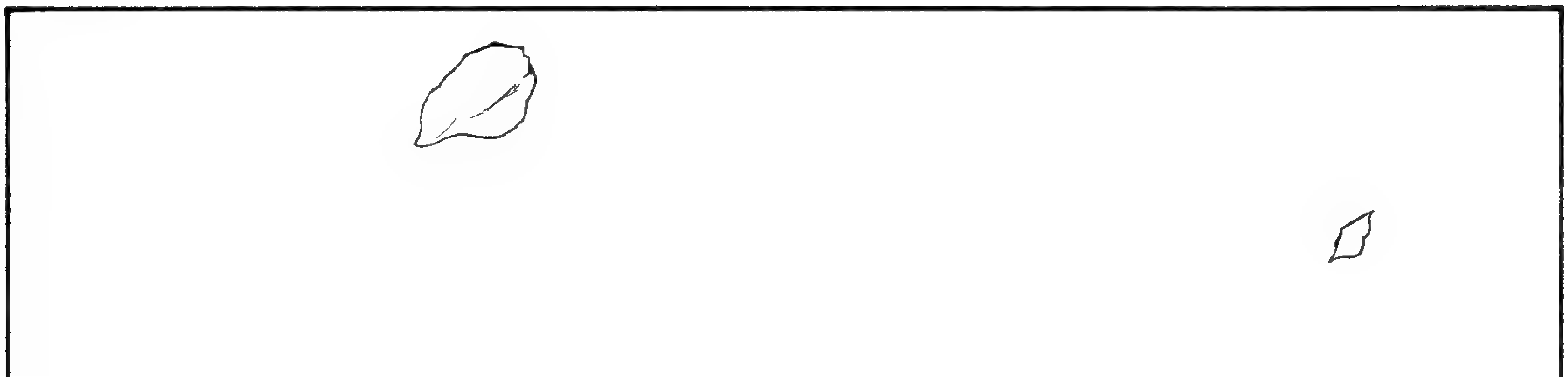
FIRST IN WILL BE ME AND MY WIFE.
THEN, WHILE ADJUSTING FOR BALANCE, THE OTHERS WILL BE PLACED INSIDE OVER THE COURSE OF THREE YEARS.
比泉
HIIZUMI
THEY'VE SEEN THE OUTLINE. THEY KNOW THEY AREN'T A MATCH.
THEY PROBABLY JUST DON'T WANT TO ACCEPT IT.
YOU'RE THE SEVENTH TO GO IN. IF ALL GOES AS PLANNED, THAT'S SIX MONTHS FROM NOW.
MAKE SURE TO HAVE A KID BEFORE THEN.
I KNOW.
YOUR BOY, AKINA.
HE'LL BE ONE TOMORROW, RIGHT?
CONGRATS.
HE'S GONNA MAKE A FINE MAN.
IYO
伊予
OF COURSE. HE'S MY SON, AFTER ALL.
HIIZUMI
比泉
OH, YEAH. I HEARD ABOUT LUCY.
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO?

I'LL TELL YOU... ...WHEN YOU GUYS COME OUT AGAIN.
TAK カタ
TAK カタ
比泉
HIZUMI
DEAL.

はっ
GASP
ばっ
FWIP
か
SNORE
MAY
4
TH
DAMN IT ALL …

ALL COFFINS HAVE BEEN FILLED WITHOUT ISSUE.
IT TOOK THREE YEARS, JUST AS PLANNED.
YEAH.


WITH THIS, THE PROGRESSION OF DIMENSIONAL FUSION AND PILLAR ZERO'S DETERRENCE ARE IN EQUILIBRIUM.
THIS OUGHT TO BUY US TIME.
YES.
HOWEVER...
...OUR DUTY ISN'T OVER YET.
...
HOW'S IT GOING?
SIR!
STAGE ONE,
THE LOADING OF 34 SUBJECTS...
...HAS JUST BEEN COMPLETED.



ざ SKD
ざ SKD
LINE UP HERE.
WHERE?
わい CHATTER
OVER HERE.
わい CHATTER
...DEMON EXAMINATIONS, EH?
うあ～ん～ WAAAH

I'M SCARED!
IT AIN'T SCARY, REALLY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
KID WON'T STOP CRYING...
...
A CHILD OF THE LOST GENERATION...
HM... A SATORI DEMON, HUH?

SHORT-CUT.
パチッ
BZZT
HAT.
ポ
POOF
ワッ
HERE, WEAR THIS.
すぽっ
SHOOP
WAH!
YOU'LL HEAR THINGS YOU DON'T WANT TO,
SO KEEP THIS ON, ALL RIGHT?
フガ
MRF
フガ
MRF
IT'S TO NIP BAD HABITS IN THE BUD.
YOU MUSTN'T RELY ON THE SATORI'S POWER.
WHAT WAS THAT?!
THAT WAS AMAZING!
ぴょん
BOING
ぴょこ
BOING
...HM.

THAT'S ODD.
KIDS USUALLY GET SCARED WHEN THEY SEE *KOTODAMA*.
WHAAAT? BUT IT'S SO COOL!
SO COOL!
WHY, THANK YOU.
IF YOU EVER MEET ANOTHER *KOTODAMA* USER, DON'T BE AFRAID AND BE FRIENDLY WITH THEM, TOO, Y'HEAR?
HUH?
I GUESS THAT'S A POOR WAY TO ASK.
HMM.
UMM...
DON'T WORRY!
I THINK I CAN BE FRIENDS WITH THEM!
I JUST THINK SO!
SHEESH.

HEY.
THE GIRL'S SCARED BECAUSE *YOU* BROUGHT HER OUT HERE.
ギロリ
GLARE
EEP!
I'LL TELL THE SENATE TO MAKE THE ROUNDS FROM NOW ON.
THAT'D BE FOR THE BEST.
ちゃっ
CHIK
I'D DEFINITELY WELCOME THE HELP...
... AND TAKE...
THOSE SUNGLASSES LOOK TERRIBLE ON YOU.
...THEY'RE CUSTOM-MADE.

HAPPY NOW, USUZUMI?
...
I'M NOT DOING IT OUT OF SELF-INTEREST.
I'M ONLY EXAMINING WHAT SORT OF INFLUENCE THE ACTIVATED PILLAR ZERO HAS ON THE DEMONS.
パ
FLAP
THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY PROBLEMS.
IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT THE LINK BETWEEN PILLAR ZERO AND THE DIMENSIONAL FUSION IS MOSTLY STABLE.
WE'VE CLEARED THE FIRST HURDLE.
GOOD.
NOW IF WE CAN JUST MAINTAIN THIS POWER AND RESCUE THE LOST GENERATION, WE'LL BE GOLDEN.
IT'S STABLE FOR NOW, HOWEVER...
WE'RE WORKING ON THAT, OF COURSE.

...IT'LL BE A DIFFERENT STORY IF SOMEONE WHO SEEKS TO ADVANCE THE FUSION APPEARS.
ADVANCE IT?
WHO'D DO THAT?
I DON'T KNOW.
NO SUCH PERSON MAY EVER APPEAR.
IT'S NATURAL TO THINK THAT NO ONE WOULD TAKE ON SUCH A MERITLESS ENDEAVOR.
HOWEVER, WE MUST HAVE A BACKUP PLAN.
RSTL
SWIF
WHAT'S THAT?
THE KEY USED...
...TO UNLOCK PILLAR ZERO'S FULL POTENTIAL.
ONCE THIS IS USED, PILLAR ZERO'S OUTPUT WILL MULTIPLY A FEW HUNDREDFOLD...
零 PILLAR
郷 ZERO
平時 AVERAGE
LOCK
最大出力
MAXIMUM OUTPUT

...AND THE LOST GENERATION WILL PERISH INSIDE.
AND IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, I WILL USE THIS WITHOUT HESITATION.
I WILL BECOME A DEVIL IF NEED BE.

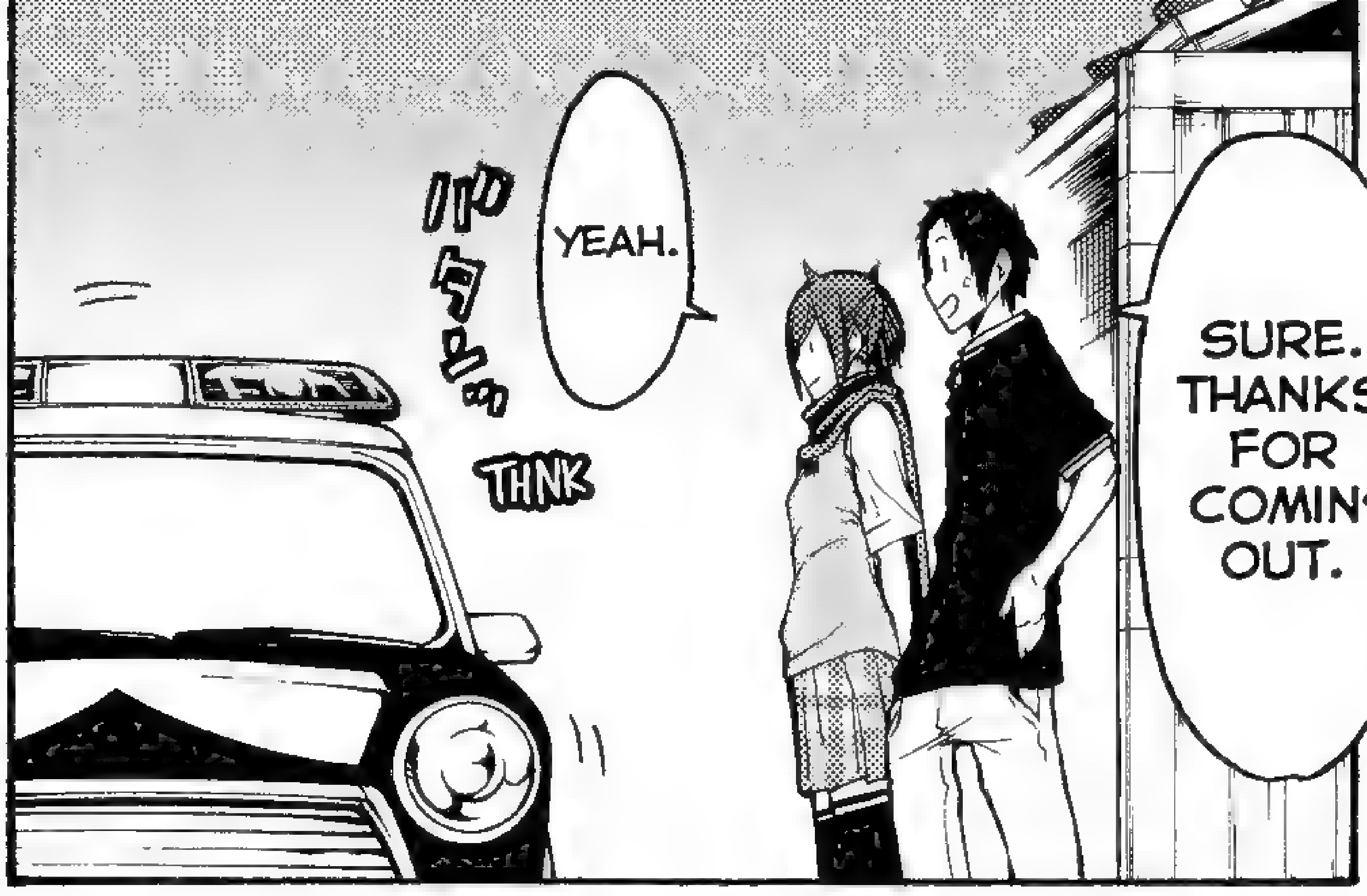
NO, YOU WON'T.
I'M GOING TO SNAP THAT IN TWO RIGHT NOW.
じ…
SKF
SAY WHAT YOU WILL, BUT THIS WILL BE OUR ONLY MEANS OF SAVING THE WORLD.
IT'S WITHOUT A DOUBT THE ONLY ONE WE WOULD HAVE AT THAT STAGE.
YOUR ARBITRARY DECISION WILL BREAK HUMANITY'S LAST HOPE.
IF THAT ISN'T SELFISHNESS, THEN WHAT IS?
...
す
SWIF
AS MAYOR, I HAVE TO SAY THAT ISN'T VERY FAIR.
MACHI...

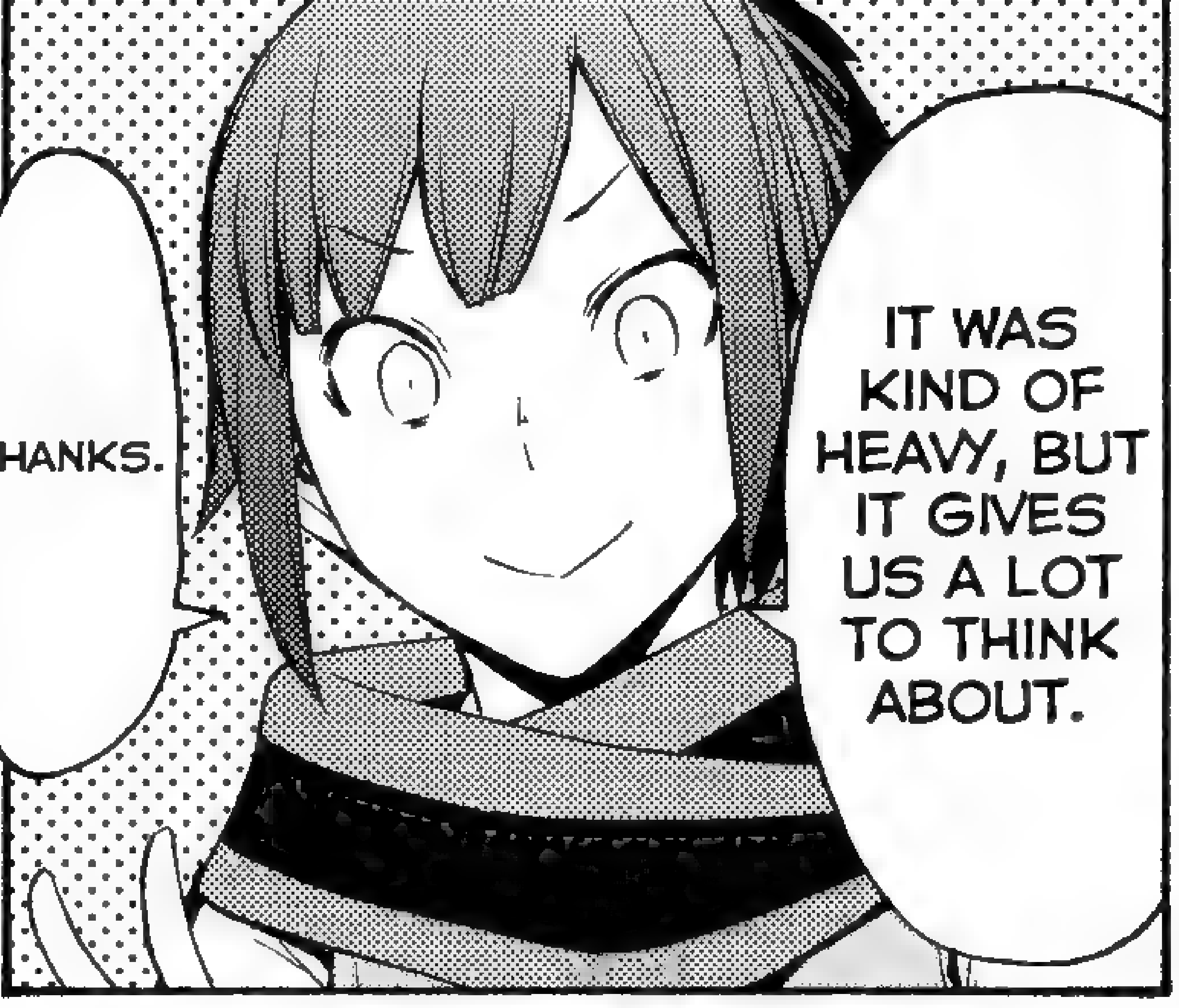
HOW DO WE MAKE IT FAIR, THEN?
DISTRICT MAYOR.
...YUP.
GIVE IT HERE.
ぱしっ
CATCH
SQUEEZE
ぎゅっ...
ぱっ
PAH
THIS IS...
I SEALED THE KEY IN A DIFFERENT SHAPE.
IN ORDER TO RETURN IT TO NORMAL...
...TUNING IS REQUIRED.
!

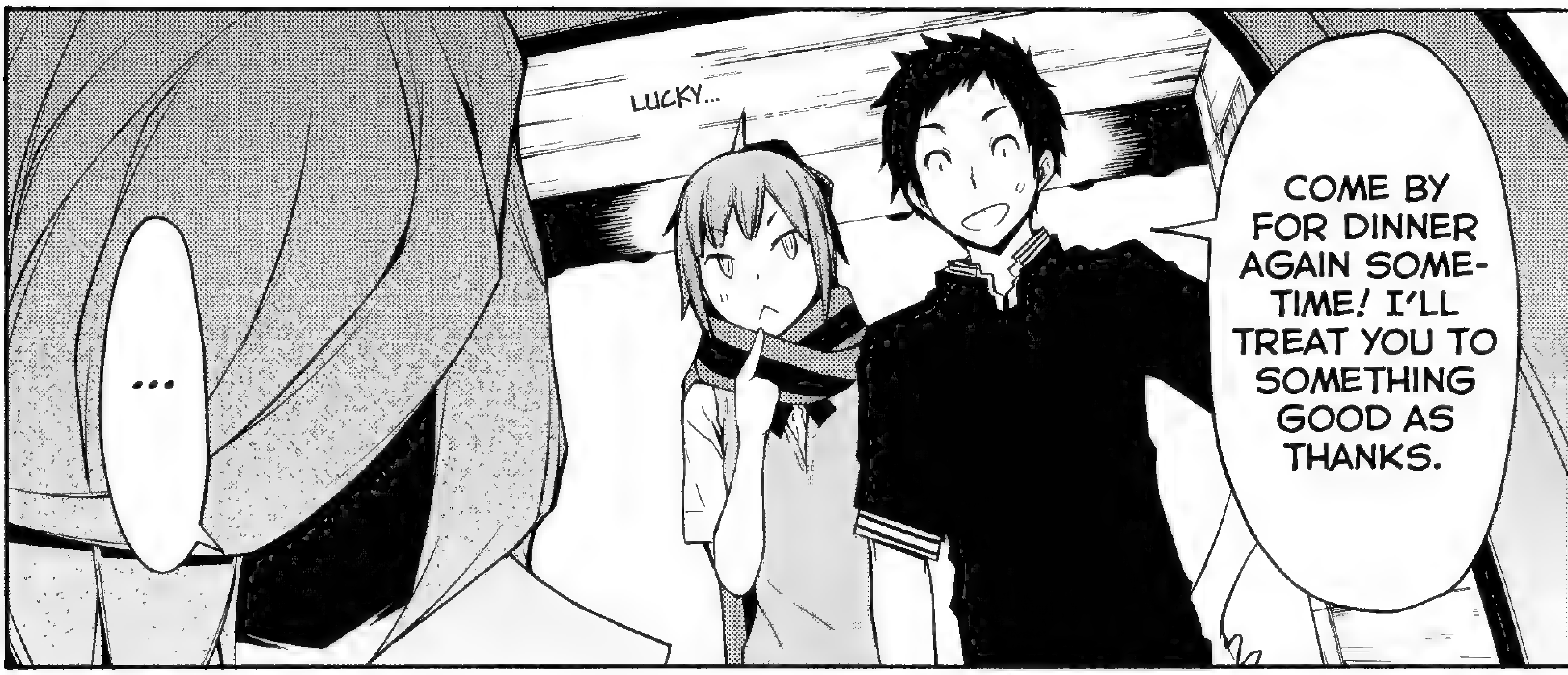
YOU KEEP IT, USUZUMI.
ぱしっ CATCH
NOW, IN ORDER TO USE THAT, BOTH THE IYOS...
...AND THE HIIZUMIS...
...MUST AGREE TO DO SO.
IF YOU EVER WANT TO USE IT, TELL MAKIHARU.
THAT'S NOT...
ACCEPT THIS CONDITION, USUZUMI.
CAN YOU REALLY SAVE THE WORLD IF YOU CAN'T EVEN CONVINCE A SINGLE PERSON?

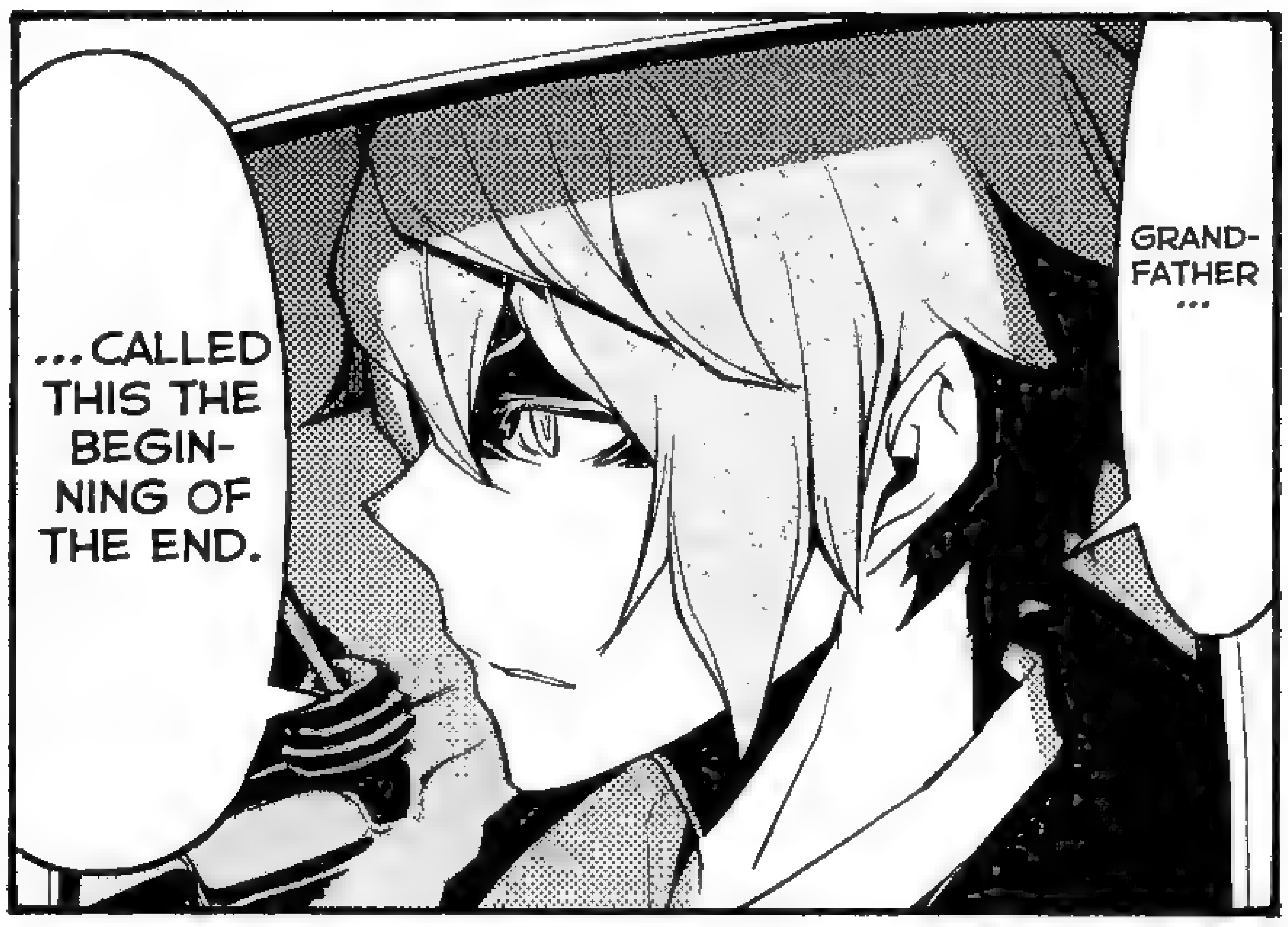
WE'RE NO MATCH FOR MACHI...
FINE.
DON'T GO LOSIN' THAT, NOW.
PUT IT IN YOUR WALLET, WHATEVER, JUST KEEP IT ON YOUR PERSON AT ALL TIMES.
ON MY PERSON...

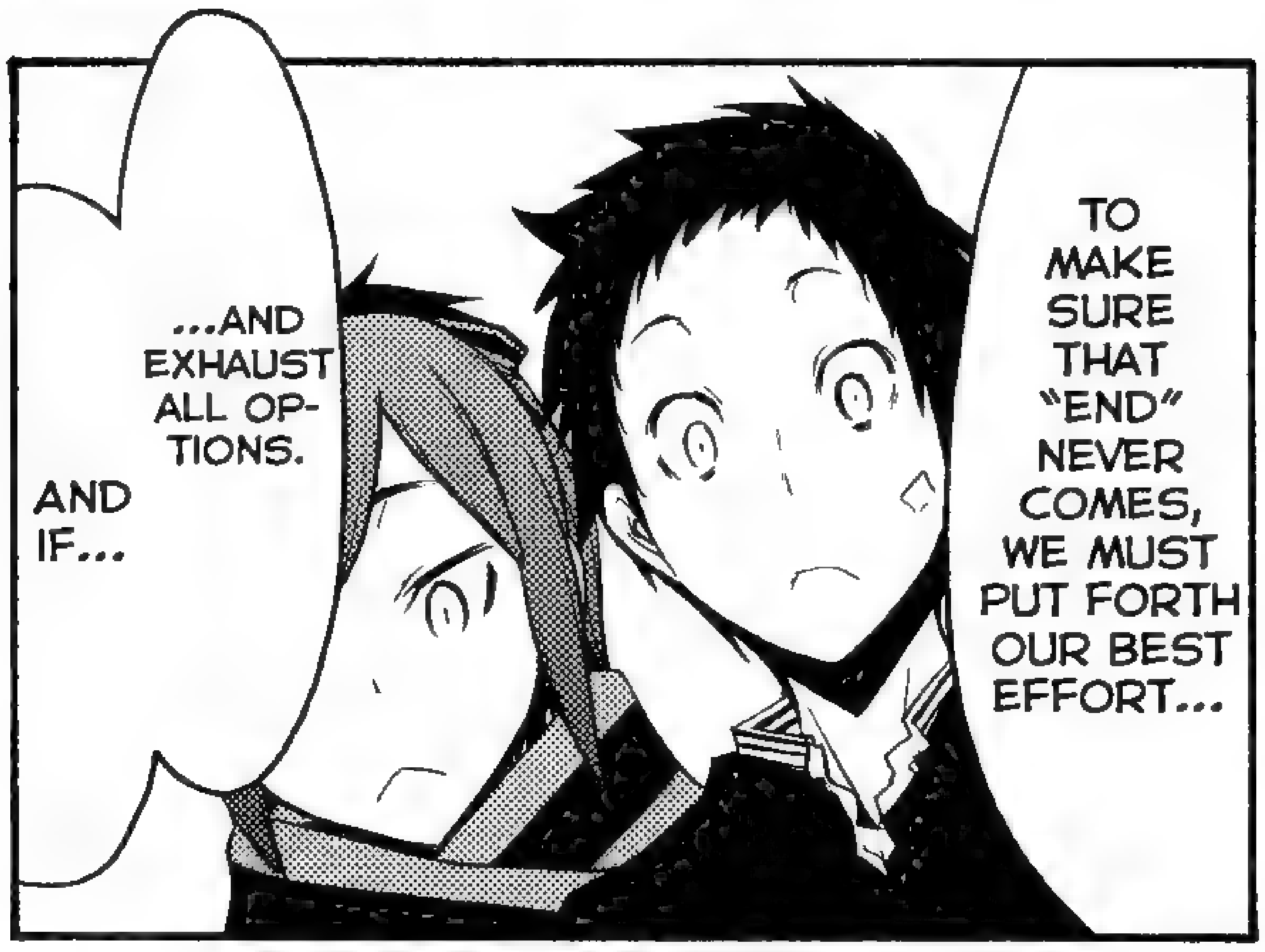
...THAT CONCLUDES EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN TOLD.
I'LL BE GOING NOW.

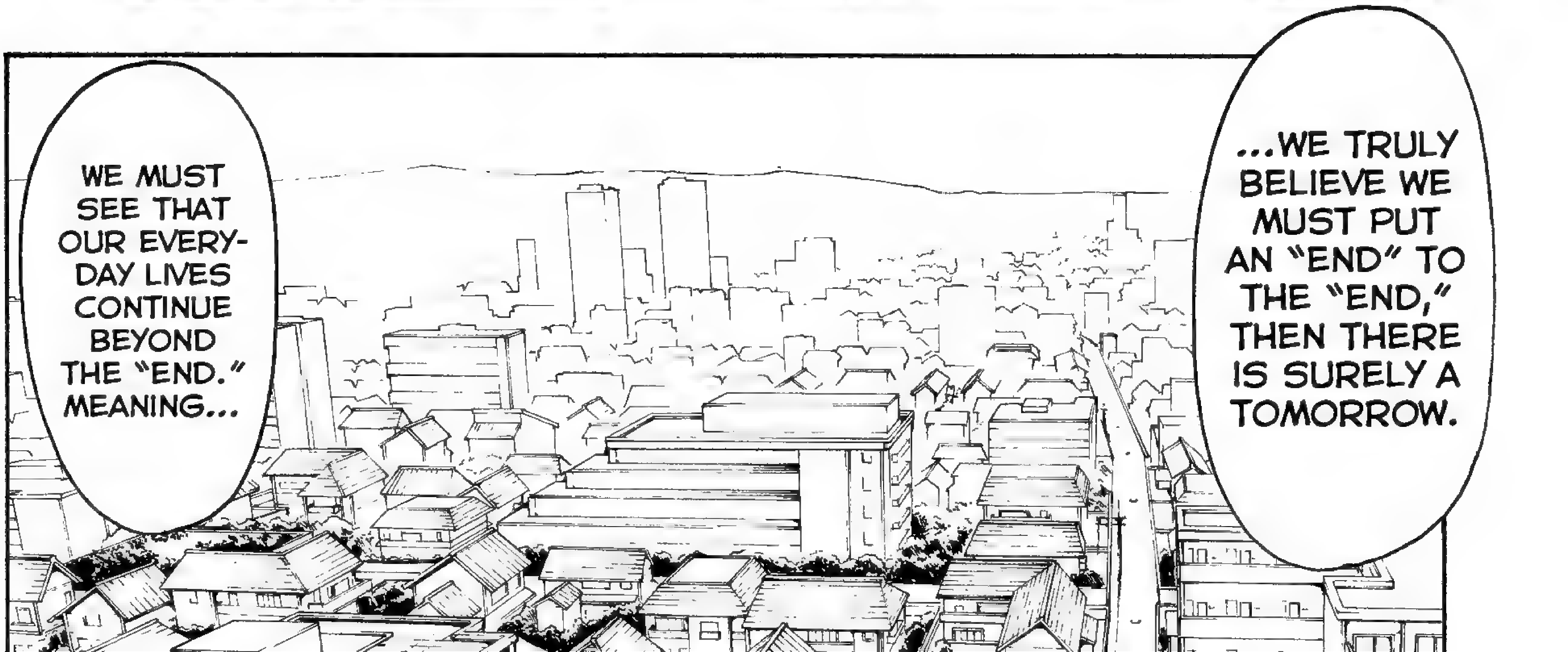

SURE. THANKS FOR COMIN' OUT.
YEAH.
THNK


IT WAS KIND OF HEAVY, BUT IT GIVES US A LOT TO THINK ABOUT.
THANKS.


COME BY FOR DINNER AGAIN SOMETIME! I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOMETHING GOOD AS THANKS.
LUCKY...
...


GRANDFATHER...
...CALLED THIS THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

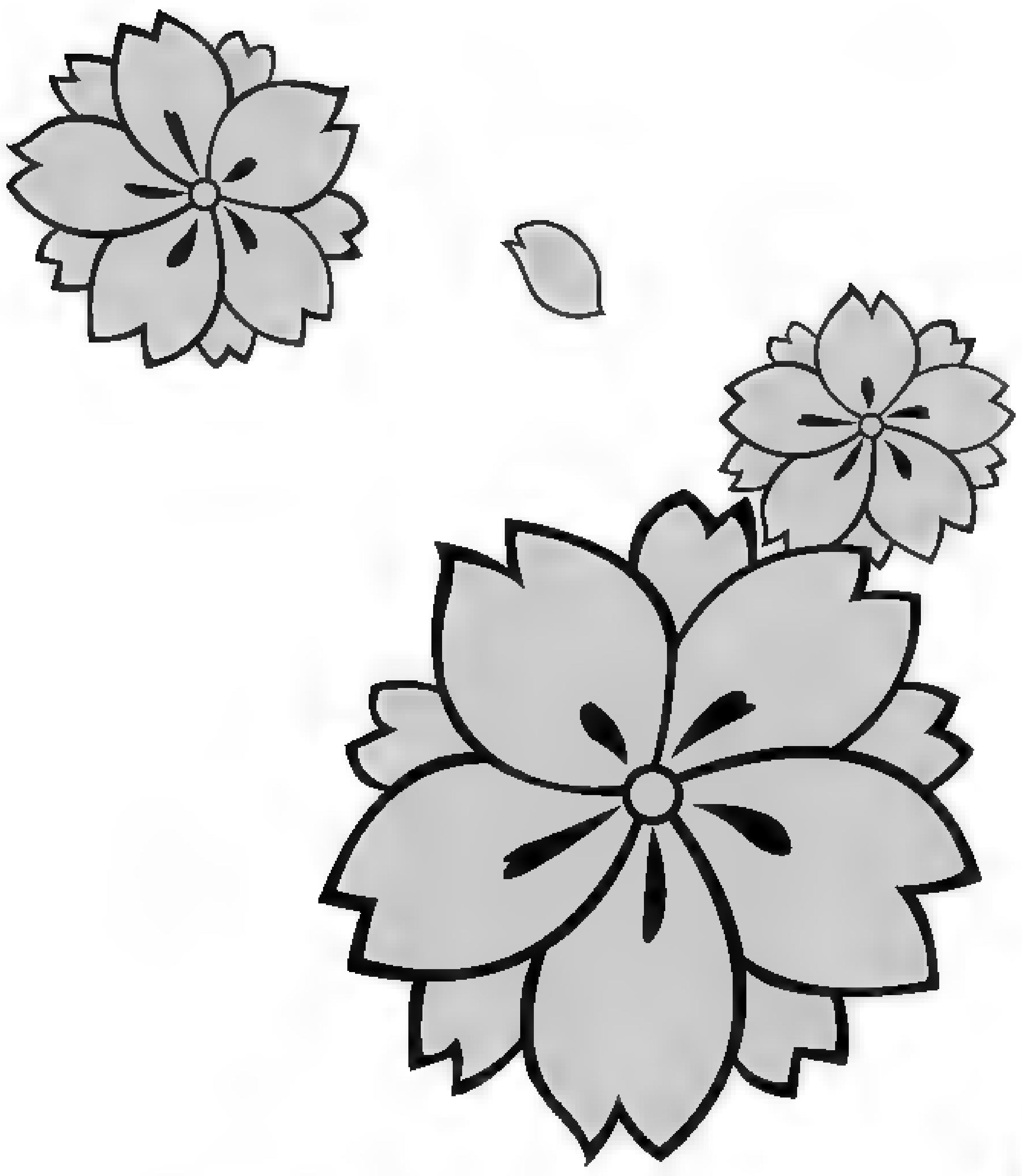

TO MAKE SURE THAT "END" NEVER COMES, WE MUST PUT FORTH OUR BEST EFFORT...
...AND EXHAUST ALL OPTIONS.
AND IF...


...WE TRULY BELIEVE WE MUST PUT AN "END" TO THE "END," THEN THERE IS SURELY A TOMORROW.
WE MUST SEE THAT OUR EVERYDAY LIVES CONTINUE BEYOND THE "END." MEANING...

...IT'S JUST AS IMPORTANT TO PUT EFFORT INTO MAINTAINING OUR EVERYDAY LIVES.
THEREFORE, AS BUT ONE FACET OF THOSE UNEVENTFUL DAYS...
...I SUPPOSE FILLING UP ON RICE AT YOUR HOUSE ISN'T BEYOND THE QUESTION.
GOT IT.
RICE?
BUT WHY RICE?
Y'KNOW. HE LIVED IN ENGLAND BEFORE.
...OH, BUT DIDN'T THE SENATE CUT EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION?
THERE ARE VARIOUS PROCEDURES TO FINISH, SO WE'VE BEEN GIVEN ONE WEEK'S LENIENCY.
IF IT'S WITHIN THAT TIME, THEN SURE...
WELL, LEMME GIVE YOU MY PHONE NUM—
OKAY.
ポピッ
BOOP
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

I'LL JUST DO SOME HACKING AND FIND IT MYSELF.
ブゥン・・・
VRUM
SOMEONE STOP THAT GUY, PLEASE...
WELL, WHAT NOW?
YOU HEARD HIM. BACK TO THE DAILY GRIND.
YUP!
TIME FOR PATROL, KYOSUKE!
CAN YOU GET GROCERIES FOR DINNER TONIGHT, TOUKA?
KOTOHA, AO, LET'S HEAD BACK TO THE OFFICE!
'KAAAY.

95TH NIGHT PAST AND PRESENT (EPILOGUE) END



YOZAKURA QUARTET 17

BEEP
BEEP
ピッ
ピッ

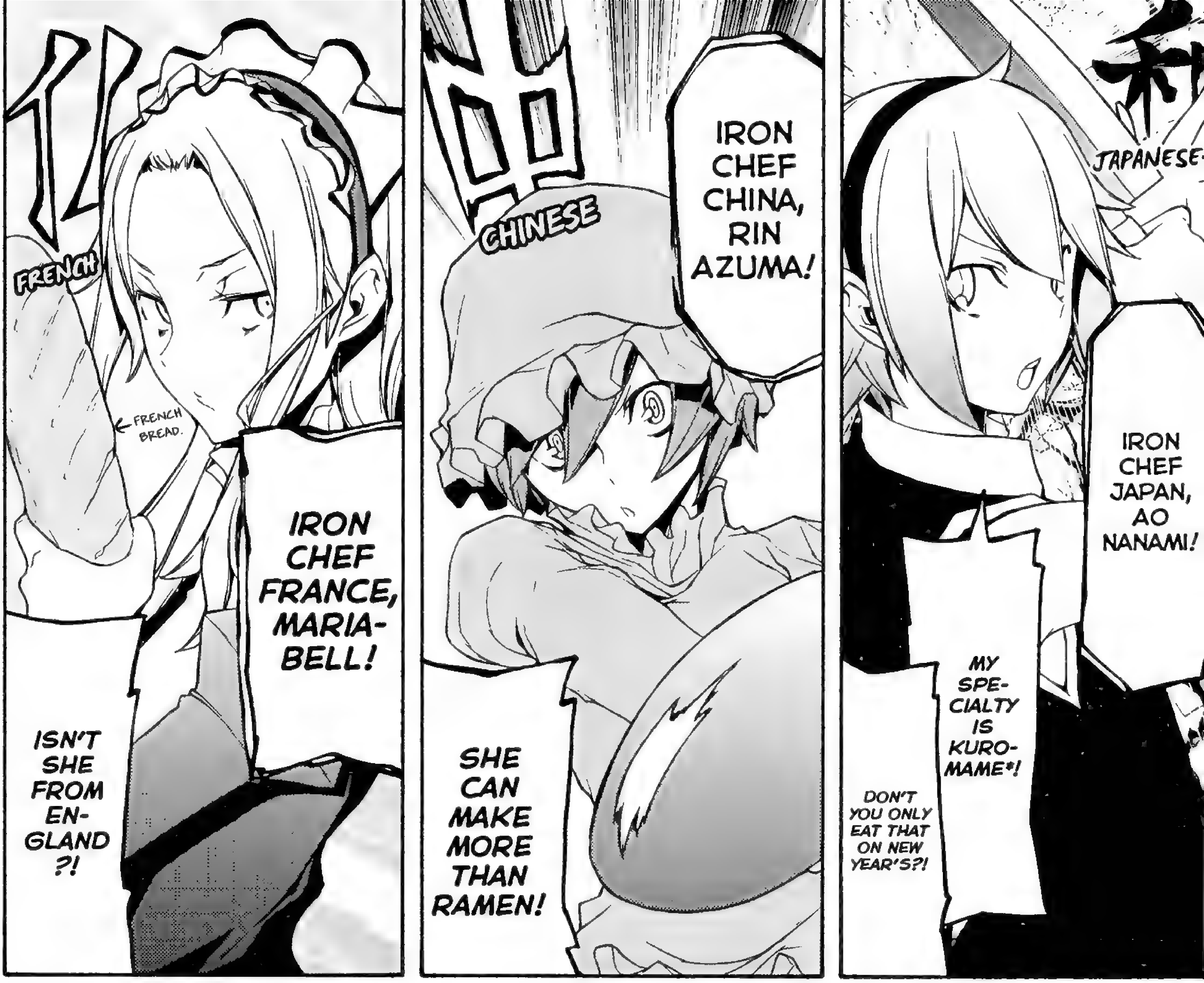
SHIINA-SAN, PLEASE GIVE MURASAKI EVERYONE'S NUMBER..

LET'S SEE. FRYPAN, FRYPAN...
どた PIT
ばた PAT
どた PIT
HAVE YOU SEEN THE LADLE?
IT'S ON THAT SHELF!
ピンポーン DING DONG
AH! THEY'RE HERE!
HEY, GUYS.
ぞや HUB
ぞや BUB
WELCOME, EVERYONE! THANKS FOR COMING.
OOOH.
ぺた RUB
ぺた RUB
THIS IS A NICE VIEW, WATCHING YOU WORK IN THE KITCHEN.
SLIIDE
EEK...!

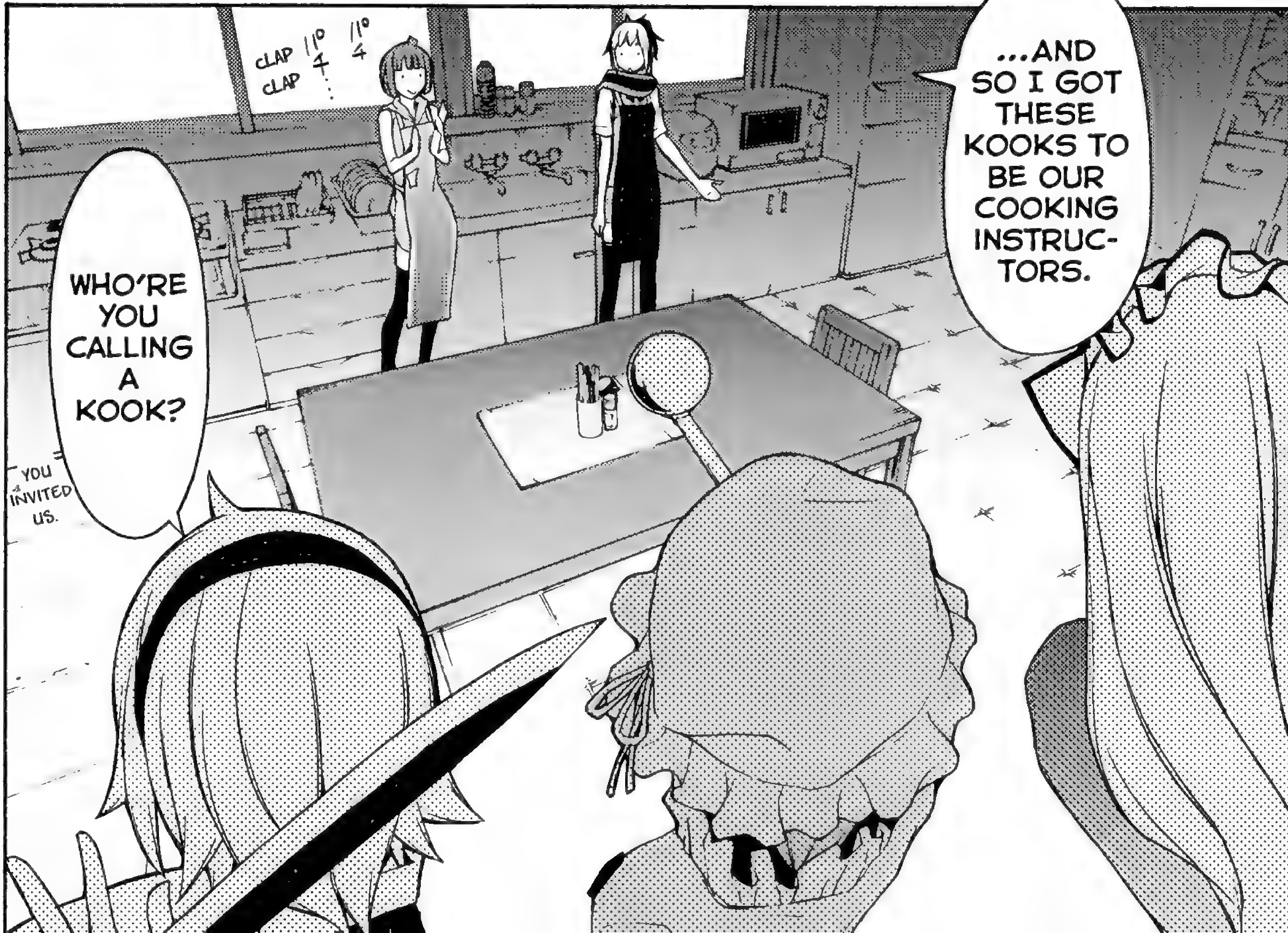
ぽいっ
TOSS
YOU CAN'T COME IN TODAY.
WHY NOOOT?
BECAUSE...
...IT'S GIRLS-ONLY.
KREE
ギィィ…
バタン…
THUD
OKAY, ALL SET.
LET'S GET STARTED.
THIS IS OUR FIRST GIRLS-ONLY COOKING CLASS,
FEATURING HIME-CHAN AND TOUKA-CHAN!

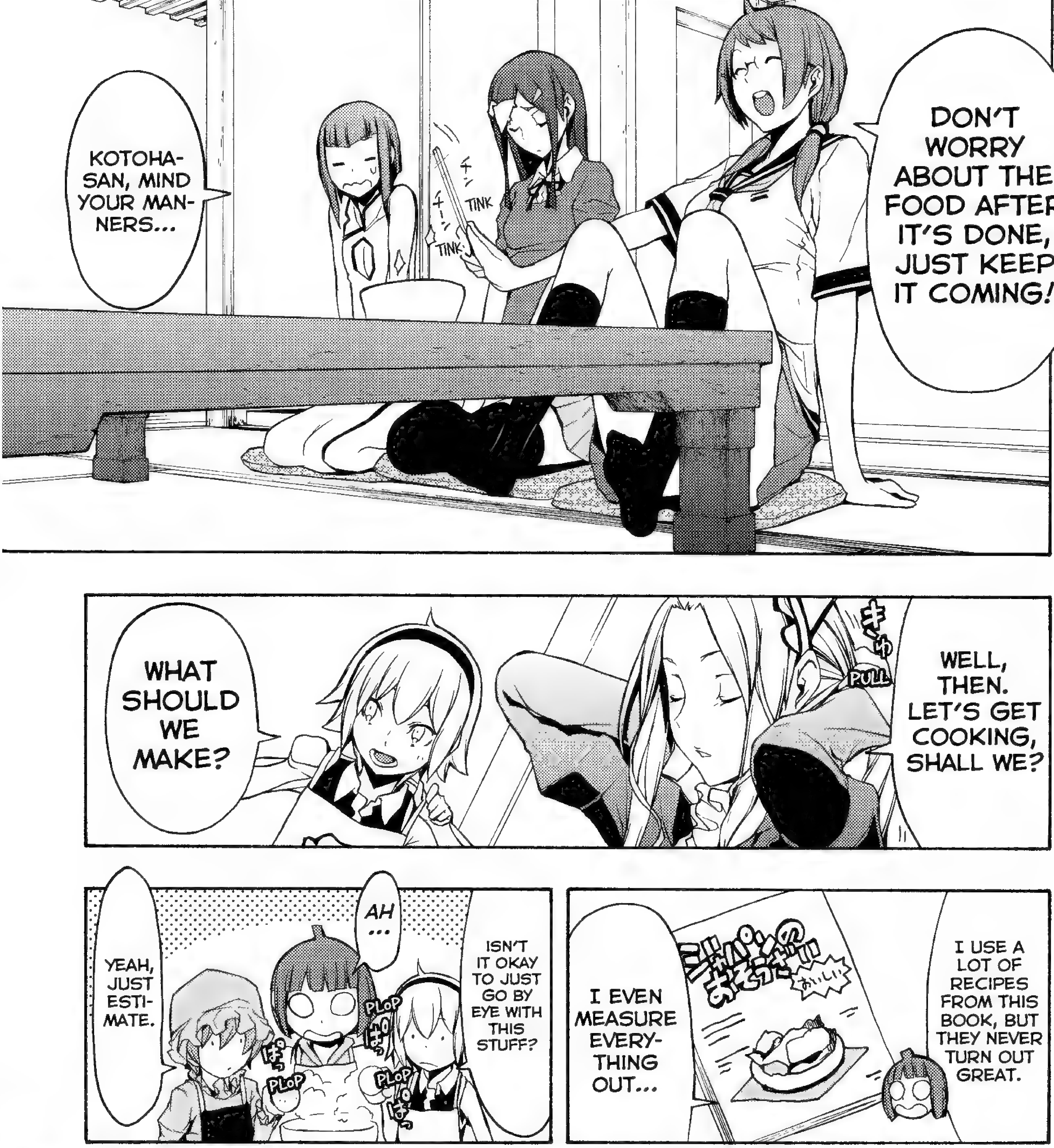
#96 GIRLS

LET THE LESSON BEGIN!
THANKS FOR ATTENDING.

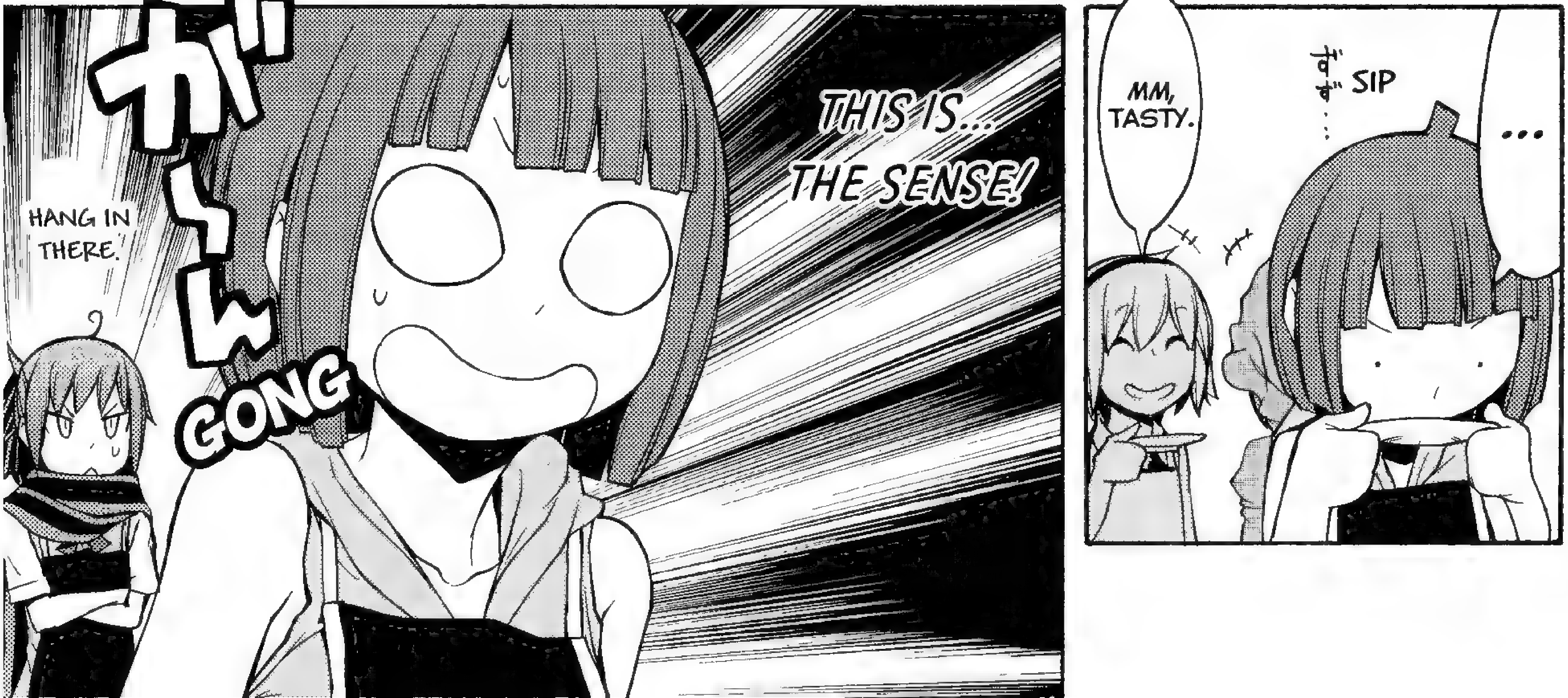

和
JAPANESE-
IRON CHEF JAPAN, AO NANAMI!
MY SPECIALTY IS KUROMAME*!
DON'T YOU ONLY EAT THAT ON NEW YEAR'S?!
中
CHINESE
IRON CHEF CHINA, RIN AZUMA!
SHE CAN MAKE MORE THAN RAMEN!
仏
FRENCH
FRENCH BREAD.
IRON CHEF FRANCE, MARIA-BELL!
ISN'T SHE FROM ENGLAND?!

*Simmered black soy beans.


...AND SO I GOT THESE KOOKS TO BE OUR COOKING INSTRUCTORS.
CLAP CLAP
WHO'RE YOU CALLING A KOOK?
YOU INVITED US.

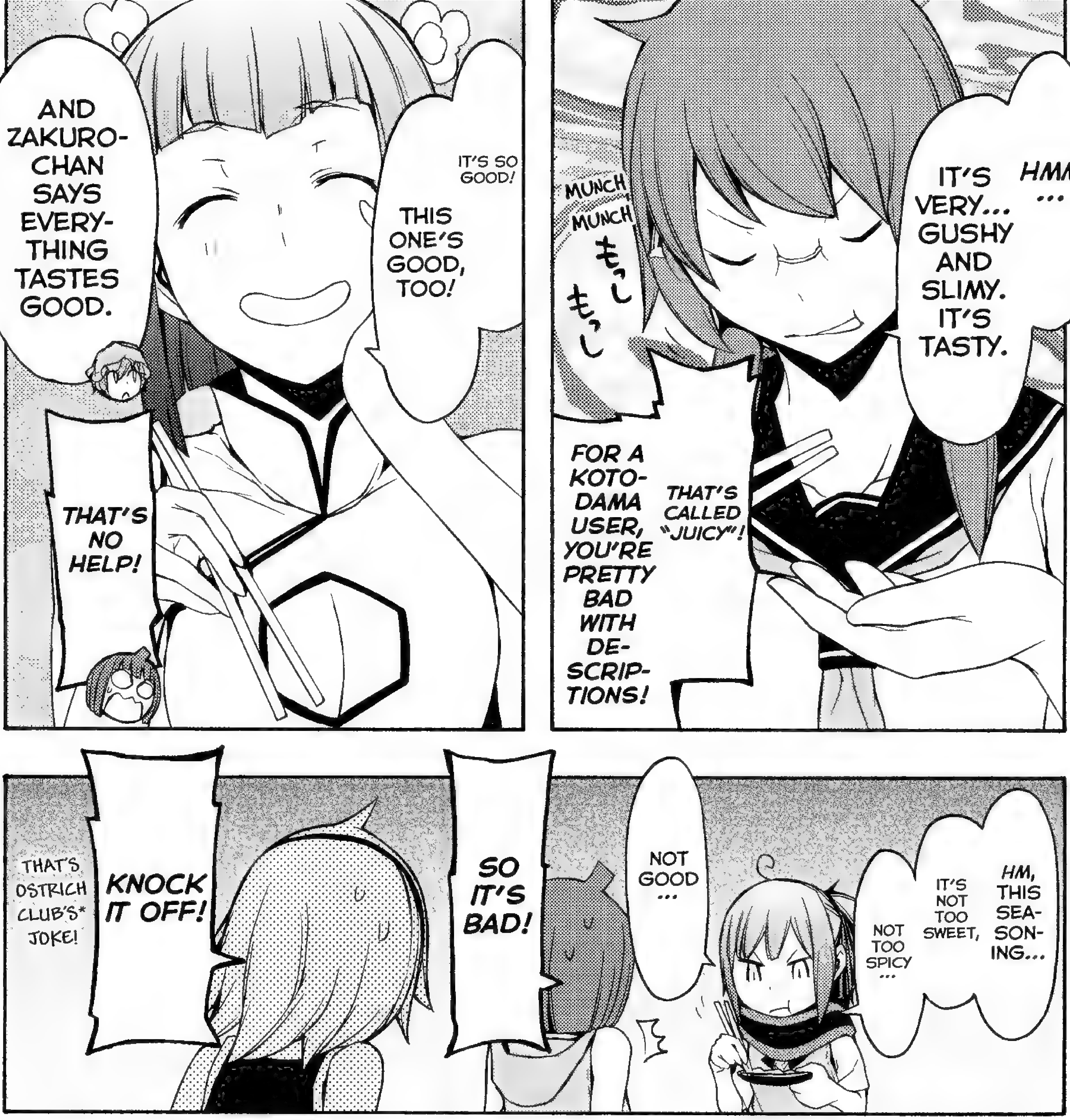

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE FOOD AFTER IT'S DONE, JUST KEEP IT COMING!
チン TINK
チン TINK
KOTOHA-SAN, MIND YOUR MANNERS...
きゅ PULL
WELL, THEN. LET'S GET COOKING, SHALL WE?
WHAT SHOULD WE MAKE?
I USE A LOT OF RECIPES FROM THIS BOOK, BUT THEY NEVER TURN OUT GREAT.
ジャパンのおそうざい
おいしい!
I EVEN MEASURE EVERYTHING OUT...
ISN'T IT OKAY TO JUST GO BY EYE WITH THIS STUFF?
AH...
ぱっ PLOP
ぱっ PLOP
ぱっ PLOP
YEAH, JUST ESTIMATE.

Book: Japanese Side Dishes (Tasty!)

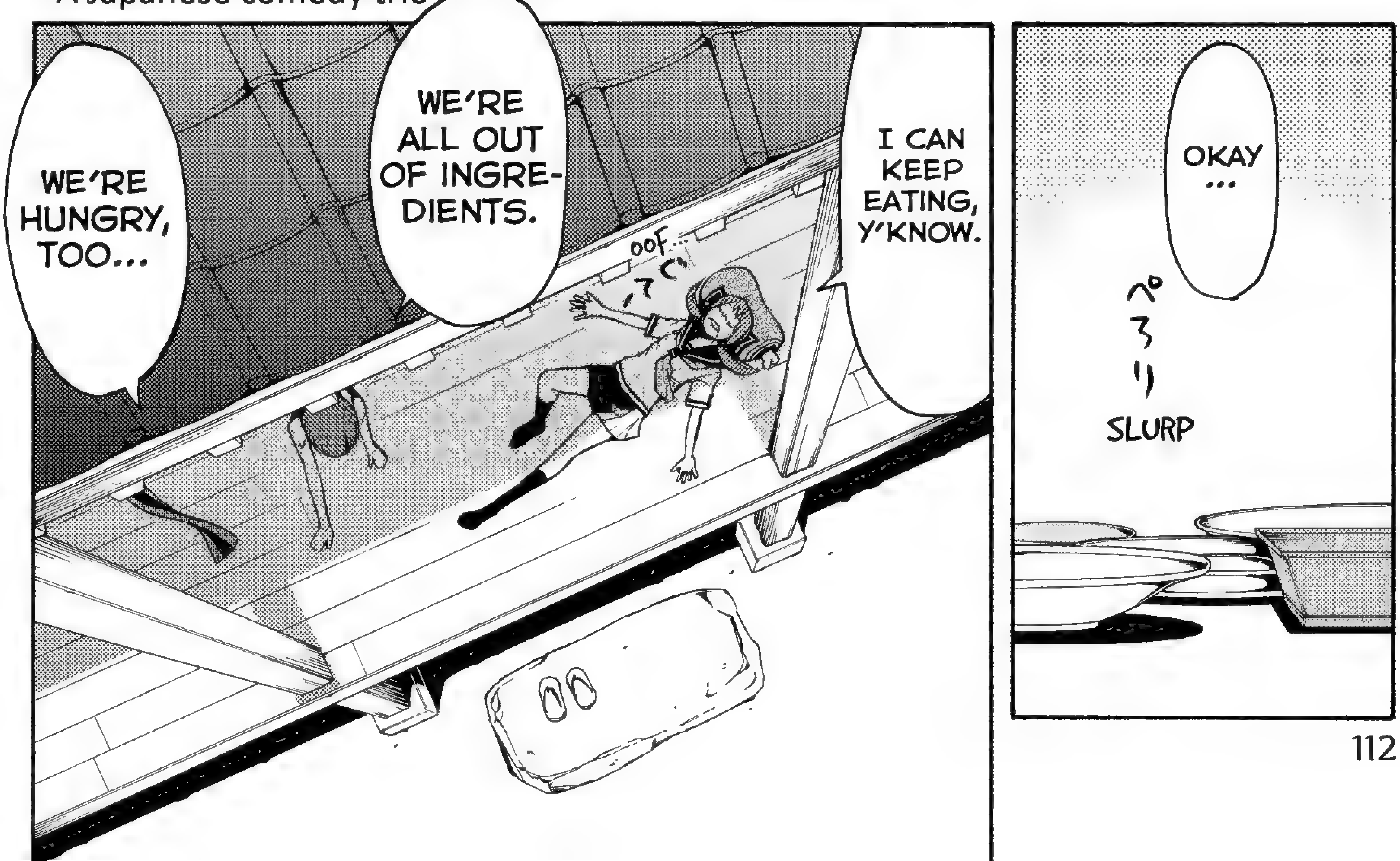

...
ずず... SIP
MM, TASTY.
THIS IS... THE SENSE!
が〜ん GONG
HANG IN THERE.

I'M KINDA SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE GOOD AT COOKING, MARIABELL-SAN!
REALLY?
WELL, IF YOU COOK FOR OVER 300 YEARS...
OH, YEAH! I FORGOT!
ギュッ
GYAH
IT MAKES SENSE FOR RIN-CHAN, SINCE SHE WORKS IN A RESTAURANT.
MMM...
TNK TNK TNK TNK
WELL, GRANNY'S A PRETTY BAD COOK, AFTER ALL.
REALLY?!
OH, CAREFUL. THAT BURNS EASILY.
TNK TNK TNK
THEN THERE'S AO, WHO CAN SOMEHOW MAKE ANYTHING.
IT JUST SORTA HAPPENED.
カパッ
POP
ORDER UP.
I MEAN, WE HAVE PEOPLE COME OVER FOR DINNER ALL THE TIME.

ぱちん
CLAP
TIME TO DIG IN!
NOW, WHICH TO START WITH...
MAKE SURE YOU TASTE TEST, OKAY? DON'T JUST PIG OUT.
I KNOOOW.
す
SWIF
THANK YOU FOR...
...THE MEAL.
スパッ
SHOOP
THERE SHE GOES, IAI-EATING!
HOW CAN YOU SAVOR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?!


HMM...
IT'S VERY... GUSHY AND SLIMY. IT'S TASTY.
MUNCH MUNCH
もっし もっし
THAT'S CALLED "JUICY"!
FOR A KOTODAMA USER, YOU'RE PRETTY BAD WITH DESCRIPTIONS!
IT'S SO GOOD!
THIS ONE'S GOOD, TOO!
AND ZAKURO-CHAN SAYS EVERYTHING TASTES GOOD.
THAT'S NO HELP!
HM, THIS SEASONING...
IT'S NOT TOO SWEET,
NOT TOO SPICY...
NOT GOOD...
SO IT'S BAD!
KNOCK IT OFF!
THAT'S OSTRICH CLUB'S* JOKE!

*A Japanese comedy trio

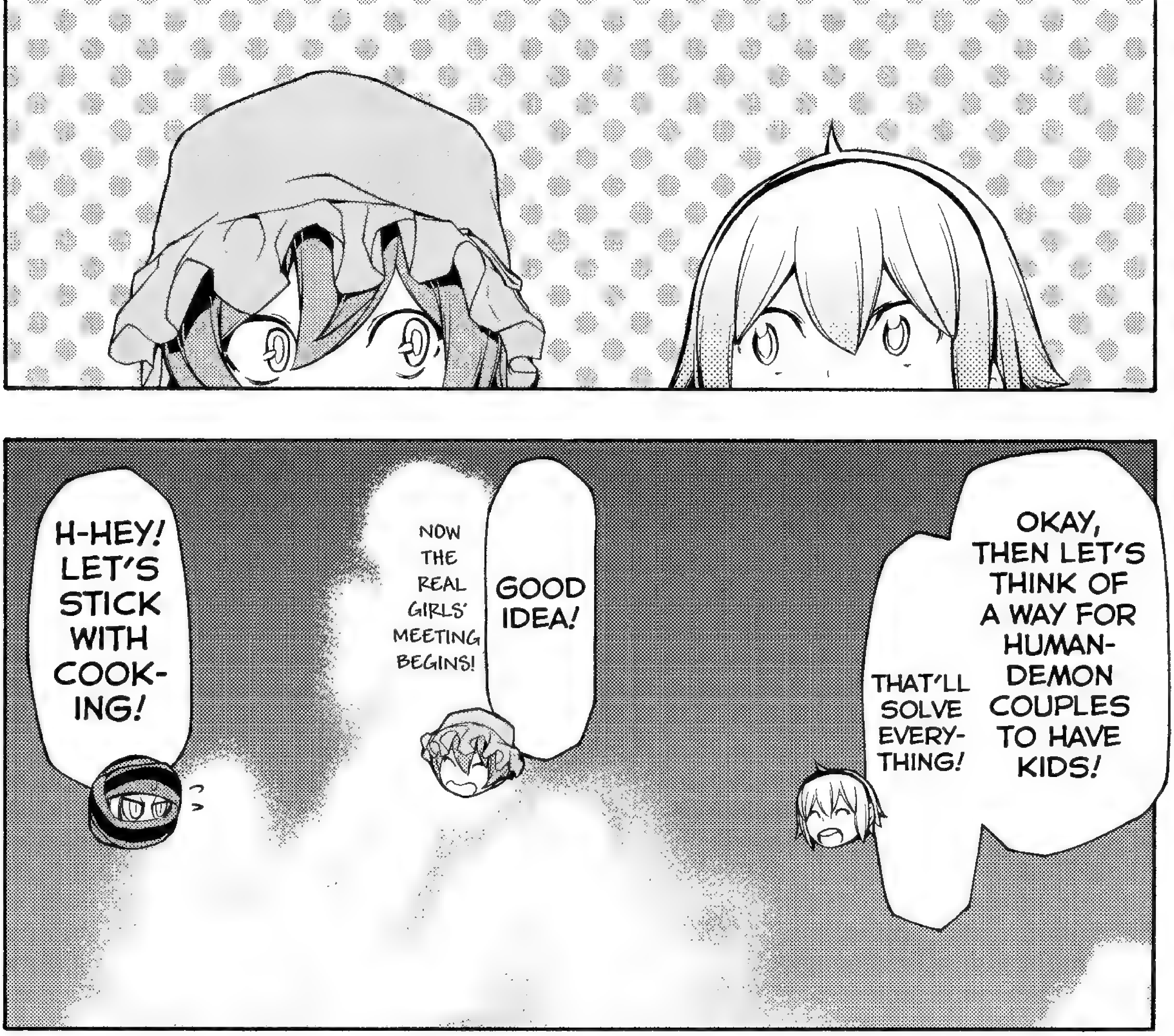

OKAY...
ぺろり
SLURP
I CAN KEEP EATING, Y'KNOW.
OOF...
WE'RE ALL OUT OF INGREDIENTS.
WE'RE HUNGRY, TOO...

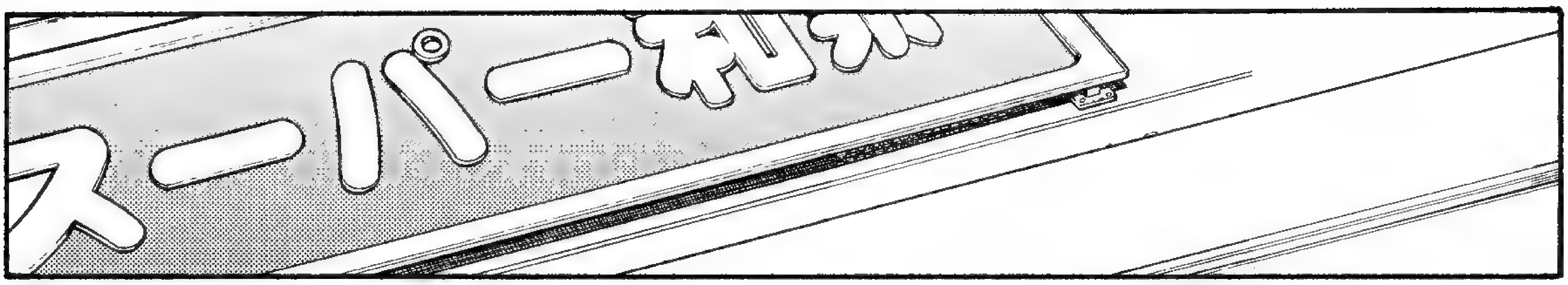
WANNA DO ANOTHER ROUND?
WE'LL BE SURE TO EAT THIS TIME.
OKAY. I'LL HEAD TO THE STORE.
I'LL GO WITH YOU TO WORK UP AN APPETITE!
ZAKURO-SAN, WOULD YOU MIND SPARRING WITH ME IN THE MEANTIME?
'KAAAY.
BALANCE BALL
I'LL CHECK ON THE DISTRICT MAYOR.
HE'S PROBABLY SULKING...
I GUESS I'LL DO THE DISHES, THEN.
GOOD CALL!
CLEAN-UP IS A VITAL PART OF COOKING!
チャプ
PLUNK
PLUNK
チャプ...
PHEEEW. ALL DONE OVER HERE!
カチャ
CLINK
カチャ
CLINK

WHAT MADE YOU WANNA PRACTICE COOKING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
YOU'RE ALREADY A GOOD COOK.
IT WAS TOUKA'S IDEA.
I JUST JOINED IN.
I'D BEEN PRACTICING HERE AND THERE, SO I THOUGHT I'D JUST REALLY GET INTO IT.
HMM…
YOU WANT TO COOK FOR AKINA-SAN, DON'T YOU?
HE, HE, HE.
カチャ CLAK
カチャ CLAK
…
WELL, AKINA'S BEEN BUSY…
SO ARE YOU.
…SO I THOUGHT IT'D BE NICE IF I COULD COOK FOR HIM.
BUT HE'S A BETTER COOK THAN ME…
IT BACKFIRED ON HIM!

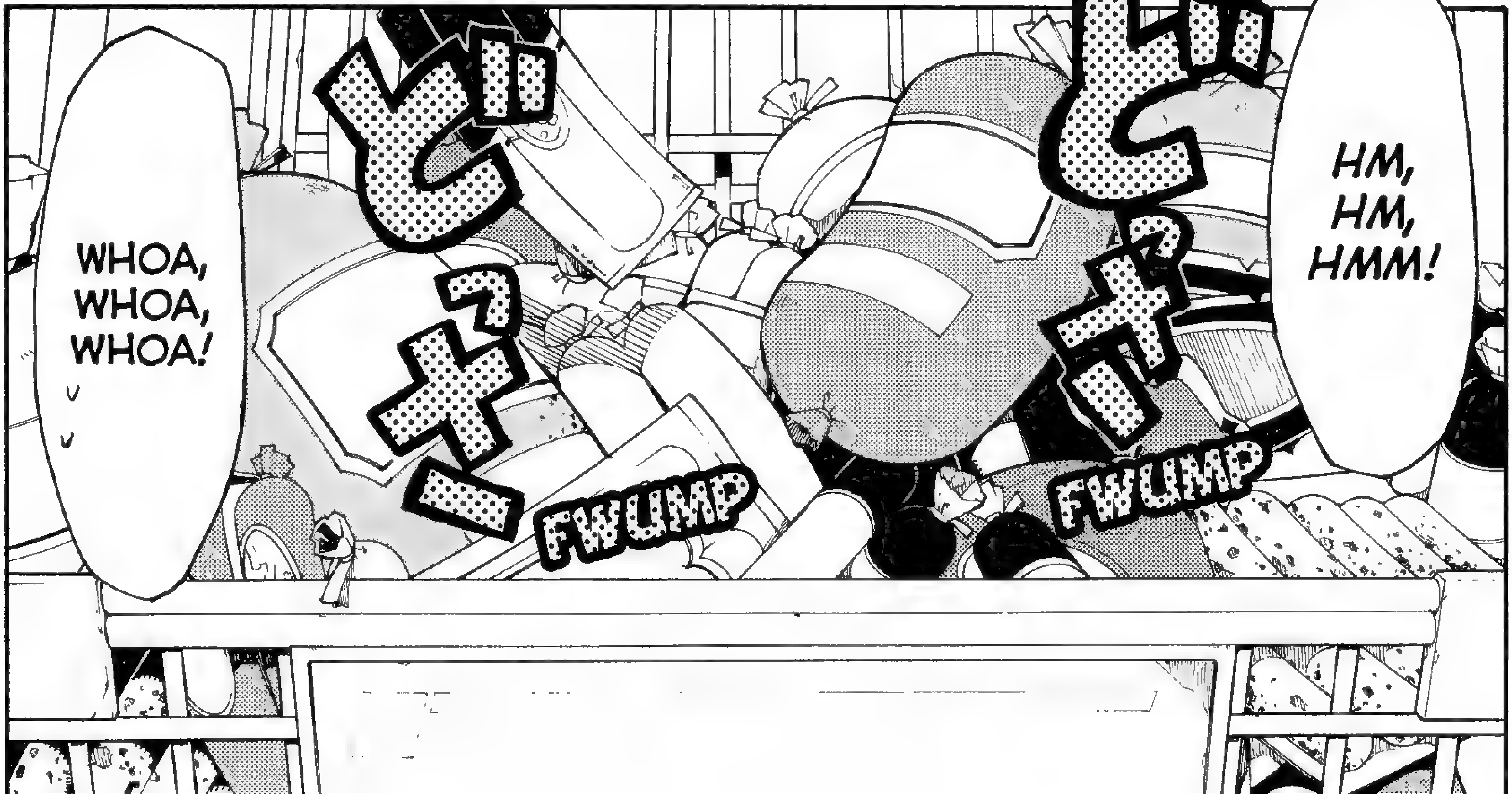
I THINK YOU GUYS MAKE A GOOD MATCH.
BRIDAL TRAINING! BRIDAL TRAINING!
KSHH
UH-OH...
PHEW, IT DIDN'T BREAK.
DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT OUT OF NOWHERE...
IT WOULDN'T WORK OUT, ANYWAY.
CLAK
AFTER ALL,
WE'RE A HUMAN AND A DEMON.
WE CAN'T HAVE BABIES...
...
NO WORRIES THERE. JUST LOOK AT MY FOSTER PARENTS.
MMM!
OH, YEAH. THOSE TWO ARE...
YUP, A HUMAN-DEMON COUPLE.

AND THEY ADOPTED ME AND ZAKURO-CHAN,
SO DON'T WORRY!
...
BUT Y'KNOW,
I'M SURPRISED YOU'RE THINKING SO FAR AHEAD, HIME-CHAN.
LIKE BABIES AND STUFF.
ぐるぐる
WRAP WRAP
SHE COCOONED.
...OF COURSE I AM.
MY FAMILY IS A LINE OF MAYORS.
SO MARRIAGE BETWEEN A HUMAN AND DEMON WON'T...


OKAY, THEN LET'S THINK OF A WAY FOR HUMAN-DEMON COUPLES TO HAVE KIDS!
THAT'LL SOLVE EVERYTHING!
GOOD IDEA!
NOW THE REAL GIRLS' MEETING BEGINS!
H-HEY! LET'S STICK WITH COOKING!



Sign: Supermarket Izumi


HM, HM, HMM!
どさっ
FWUMP
どさー
FWUMP
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!

OH! THIS LOOKS GOOD, TOO.
THAT'S TOO MUCH, KOTOHA-CHAN!
AND IT'S ALL SAUSAGES!
NOTHING SAYS GERMANY LIKE SAUSAGE!
GERMAN
BUT THOSE ARE PROBABLY DOMESTIC!
ALSO, THAT'S HAM.
WHAT MADE YOU WANNA UP YOUR COOKING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
IT WASN'T EXACTLY SUDDEN.
HIME-CHAN AND ONII-CHAN ALWAYS COME HOME TIRED, SO I CAN'T JUST STAY BAD AT COOKING FOREVER, RIGHT?
I WANT THEM TO EAT GOOD FOOD AND CHEER UP!
HMM.
AND COOK FOR AKINA, I'M SURE.

MUMBLE MUMBLE
BUT I WON'T SAY THAT OUT LOUD ...
WHAT ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT, KOTOHA-CHAN?
...
YOU COULD PROBABLY BAG HIM EASILY IF YOU JUST FLAUNT THIS VOLUPTUOUS BODY OF YOURS.
GYAHHH!
NOT AGAIN!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
ARE YOU THE SHRIMP?!
HO HO HO
FWIP
OH, BUT ...
...SHE DIDN'T SEEM BOTHERED WHEN HIME HAD AKINA'S HEAD IN HER LAP.
IT'S HARD TO GET A READ ON HER.
IS SHE OVER HIM?

OOP, HEY, GUYS.
ぐうぜん
WHAT A COINCIDENCE!
AKINA-SAN!
ピーン
DING
AAAKINA! I WANNA EAT TARAKO* PASTA!
ぎゅ
MUSH
WH-WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
HEY! BREAK IT UP! WE'RE IN PUBLIC!
むぎゅ
SHOVE
WHOA!
THAT LOOKS HEAVY. PASS IT HERE.
ひょい
SWIPE
TH-THANKS...
きゅーん
THROB
...

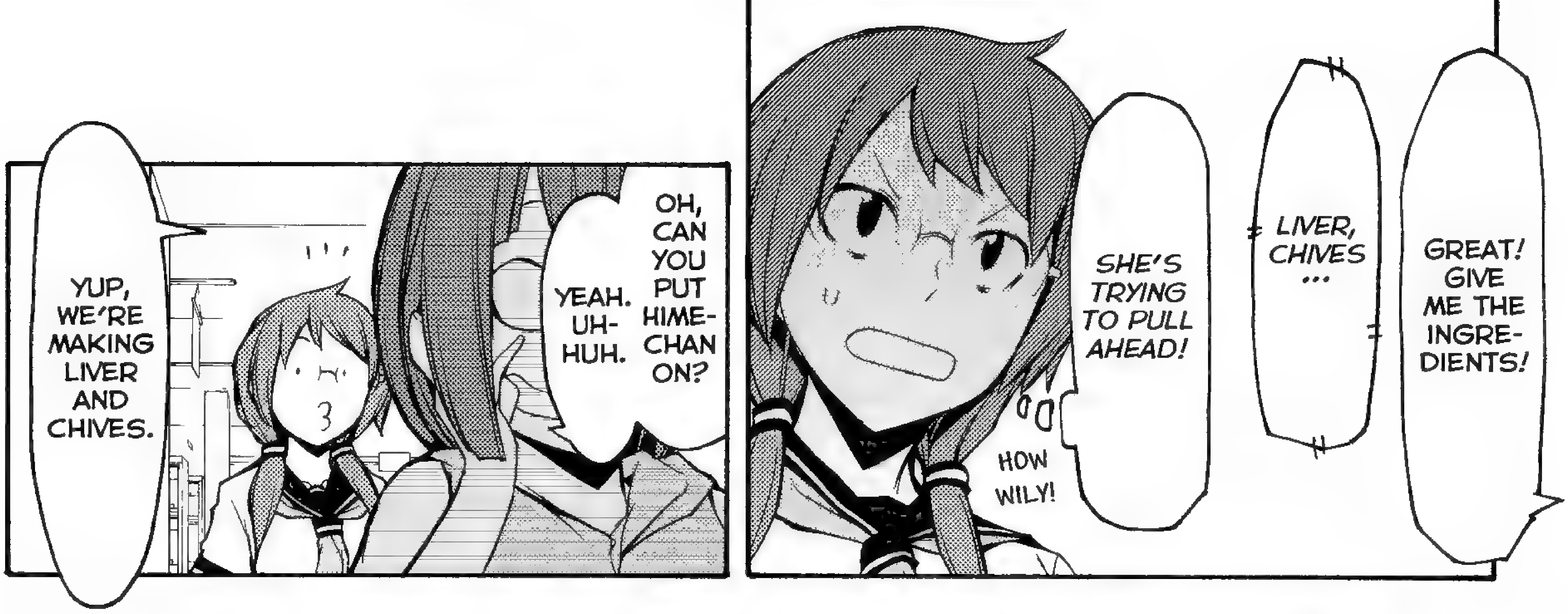
*Pasta tossed with salted roe.

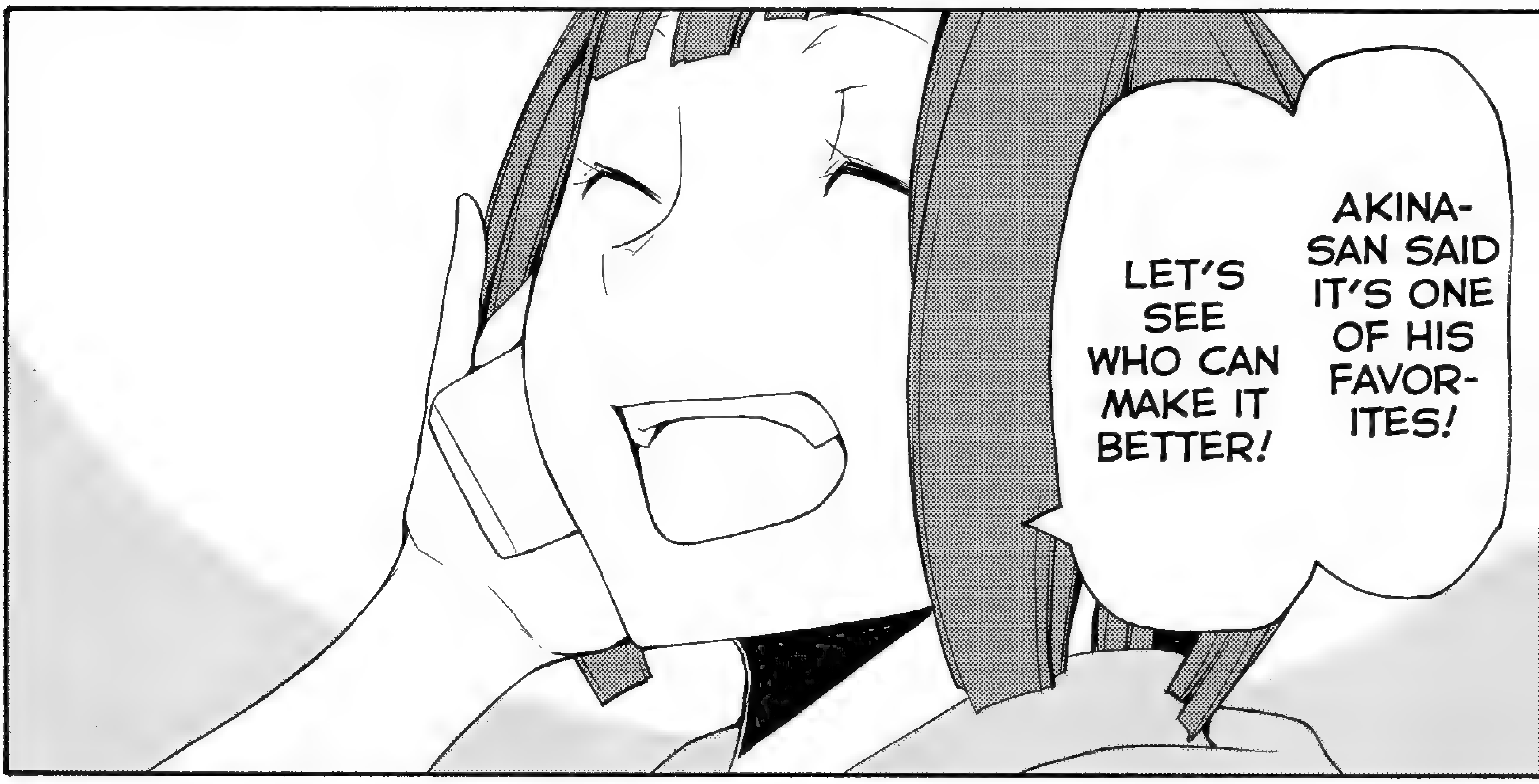
GUESS NOT...
HUH? WHAT ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT?
DRINKING WATER
OKONOMIYAKI ING.
PICNIC ITEMS
WHEAT FLOUR
OH, JUST HOW YOU STILL LIKE AKI—
AAH! WHAT'RE YOU BLABBING?!
MRRF
もが
もが
MRRF
WELL, YOU WERE PRETTY QUIET WHEN HIME GAVE AKINA A LAP PILLOW THE OTHER DAY,
SO I WAS JUST CURIOUS.
HUH? MMM...
LATELY, I DON'T REALLY MIND WHEN IT'S HIME-CHAN.
I LOVE HER, TOO, SO...
YOU DON'T LOVE ME, TOUKA?
NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I... OH, YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!
AKINA-SAN WAS THE FIRST ONE TO TREAT ME NICELY WHEN I CAME HERE.
HOW DO I PUT IT? I GUESS I JUST REALLY ADMIRE HIM.
HE'S ALSO KINDA LIKE AN OLDER BROTHER.
148
HMM.

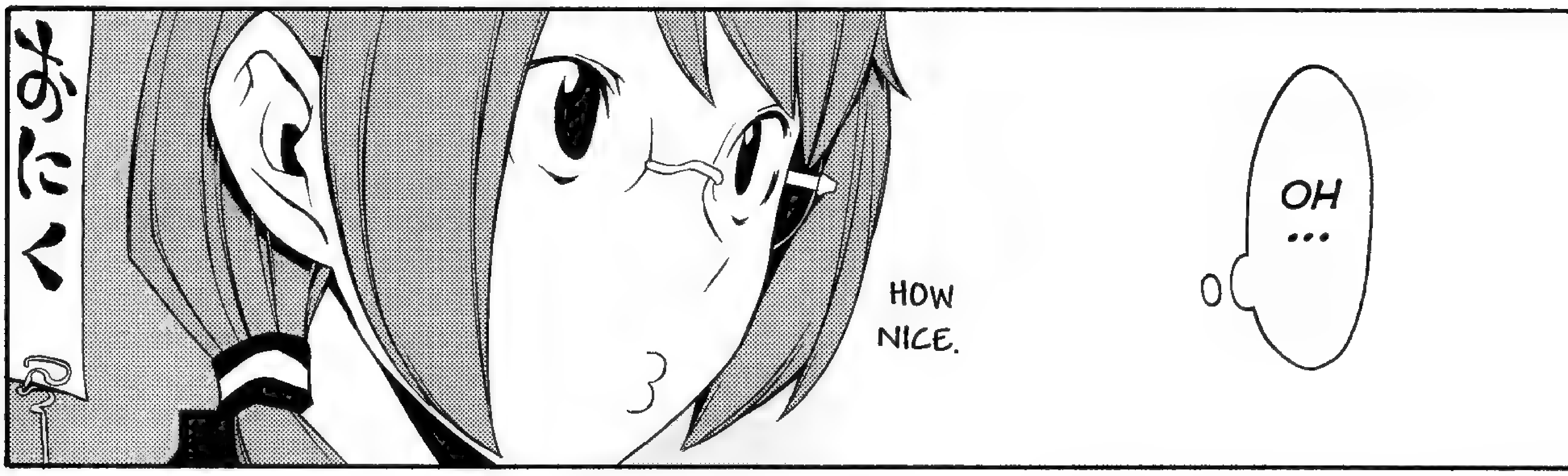
I FOUND THE KING OYSTER MUSHROOMS OVER THERE.
OH, THANKS.
MU-MURASAKI-KUN!
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING TOGETHER?
HEY, PURPLE*.
WHO'RE YOU CALLING PURPLE?
WE HAVE OUR REASONS. I FOUND THE *MAITAKE* MUSHROOMS, TOO.
THANKS.
HE ALWAYS JUST SHOWS UP...
...
AHA, A NEW CANDIDATE'S ON THE BLOCK.
HUUUH?! NO WAY! NUH-UH!
?
NEVER!
HM.
HAVE YOU GROWN?
I NEED YOU TO REPORT THOSE SORTS OF CHANGES FOR POSTERITY'S SAKE...
ぬ
MOOSH
HEY...!

*"Murasaki" is Japanese for purple.

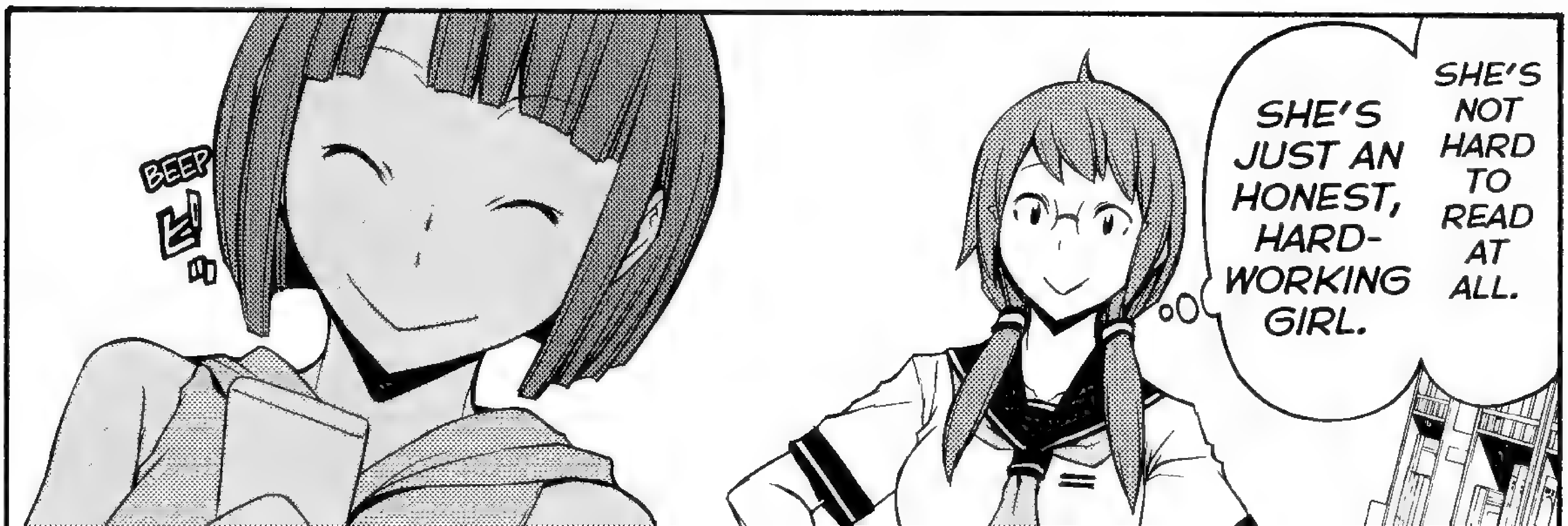
I SWEAR! ALWAYS OUT OF NOWHERE!
YOU SURE?
POSITIVE! PROBABLY...
HE'S MORE LIKE A DIFFICULT LITTLE BROTHER.
ER... AKINA-SAN IS THE BIG BROTHER...
MURASAKI-KUN IS THE LITTLE BROTHER...
のー…
TAP
WHY ARE THERE NO GUYS WHO FIT ME?!
あーん
WAAAH
DON'T SAY FIT.
HMM. I FEEL LIKE EATING LIVER AND CHIVE STIR-FRY.
YOU LIKE LIVER, AKINA-SAN?
HM? YEAH, I DO.
I SEE...
ピッポッパッ
BEEP BOOP BAP
こそっ
WHISPER
RIN-CHAN? CAN YOU MAKE LIVER AND CHIVE STIR-FRY?
YOU BET!


GREAT! GIVE ME THE INGREDIENTS!
LIVER, CHIVES...
SHE'S TRYING TO PULL AHEAD!
HOW WILY!
OH, CAN YOU PUT HIME-CHAN ON?
YEAH. UH-HUH.
YUP, WE'RE MAKING LIVER AND CHIVES.


AKINA-SAN SAID IT'S ONE OF HIS FAVORITES!
LET'S SEE WHO CAN MAKE IT BETTER!


おにく
OH...
HOW NICE.

Sign: Meat


BEEP
ピッ
SHE'S NOT HARD TO READ AT ALL.
SHE'S JUST AN HONEST, HARD-WORKING GIRL.

HM?
OH, MURASAKI-KUN, DO YOU HAVE ANY FAVORITE DISHES?
BEEF STEW, I SUPPOSE?
GOT IT! I'LL MAKE SOME FOR YOU!
THAT'D BE MARICCHI'S FIELD.
IT'LL BE REALLY GOOD, SO MAKE SURE YOU EAT IT ALL, OKAY?
THAT'S RIGHT...
TOUKA'S TOO PURE AND HARD-WORKING.
SHE'S A NATURAL-BORN TEASE!
YOU'RE IN FOR A LOT, MURASAKI...
GOOD LUCK!
?

96TH NIGHT GIRLS END

SUPPOSEDLY HAS A LOT OF SECRET ADMIRERS IN TOWN...

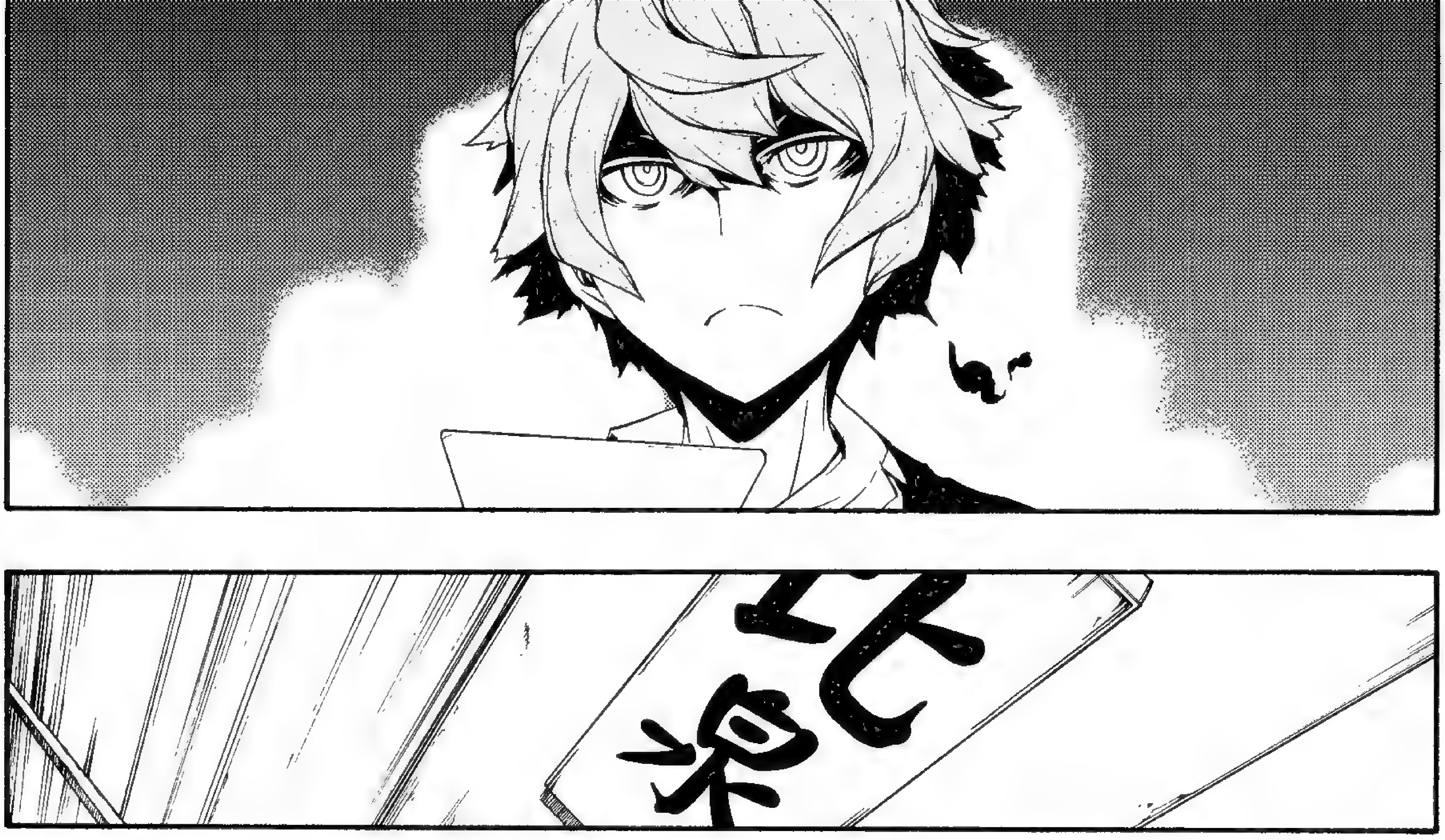
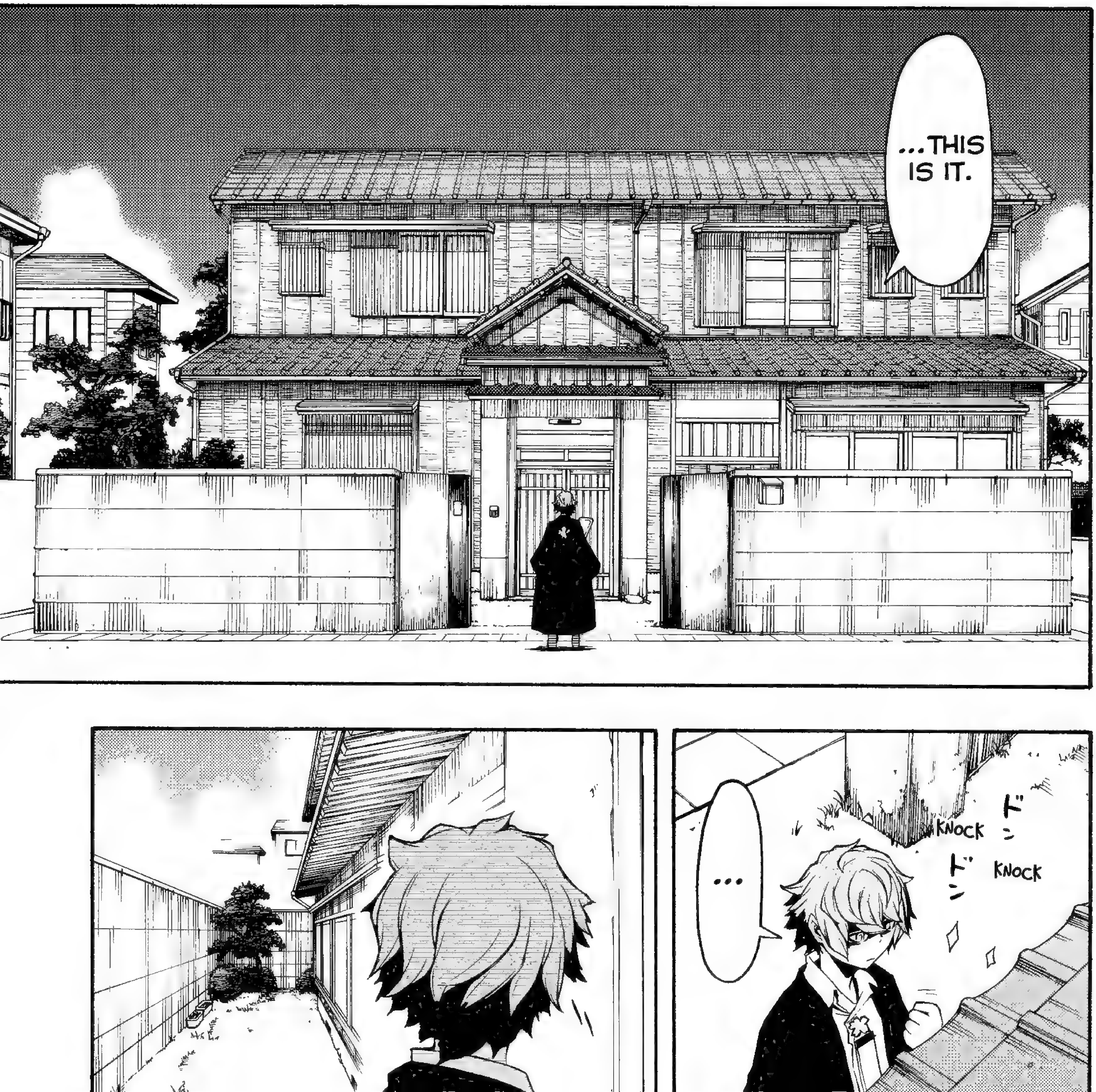


Plate: Hiizumi


...THIS IS IT.
ドン KNOCK
ドン KNOCK
...

SNORE
ガー…
…MEE
…MEE
HOW CARELESS.
…MEE
…MEE
…MEEEE
…MEE
…MEE

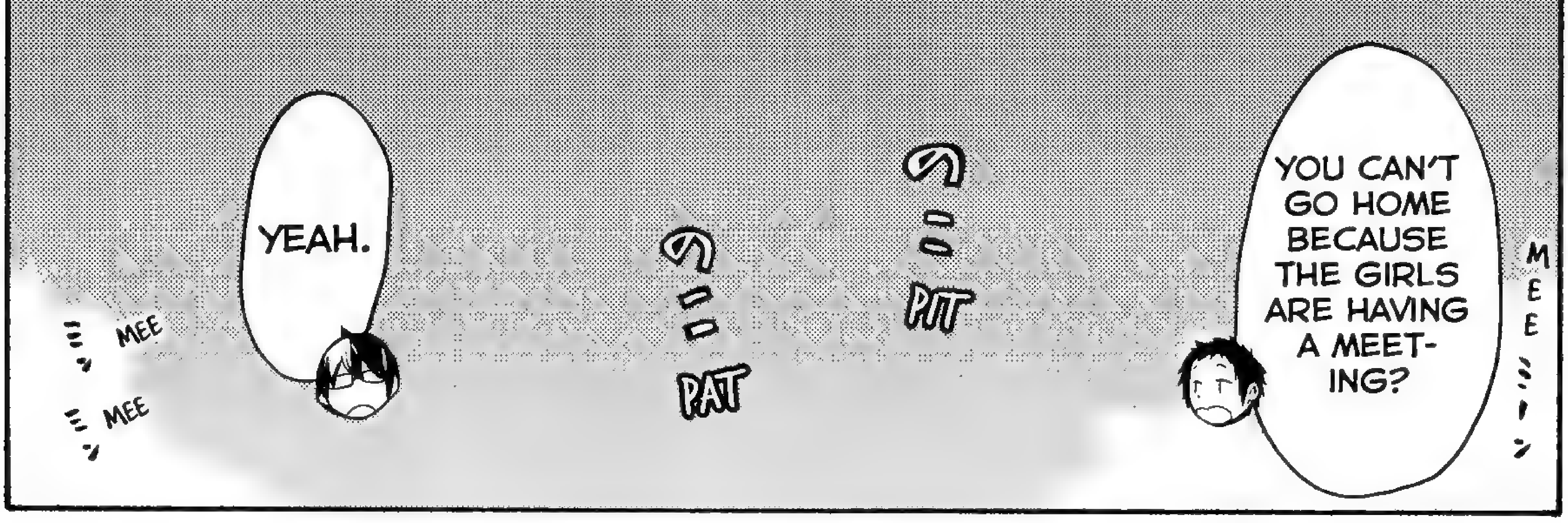
FOR SOMEONE WHO LIVES ALONE, THE PLACE SURE IS TIDY.
MUST BE IN HIS NATURE.
GRUM GRUM
つガつが
ぐー
SNORE
AKI-NA...
CLEAN UP A LITTLE, WILL YA?
MMM... I'LL DO IT LATER, GRANDPA!
SHEESH.
IT'S GREAT THAT HE'S SO ENERGETIC.
I JUST WISH HE'D BE A LITTLE LESS SLOPPY...

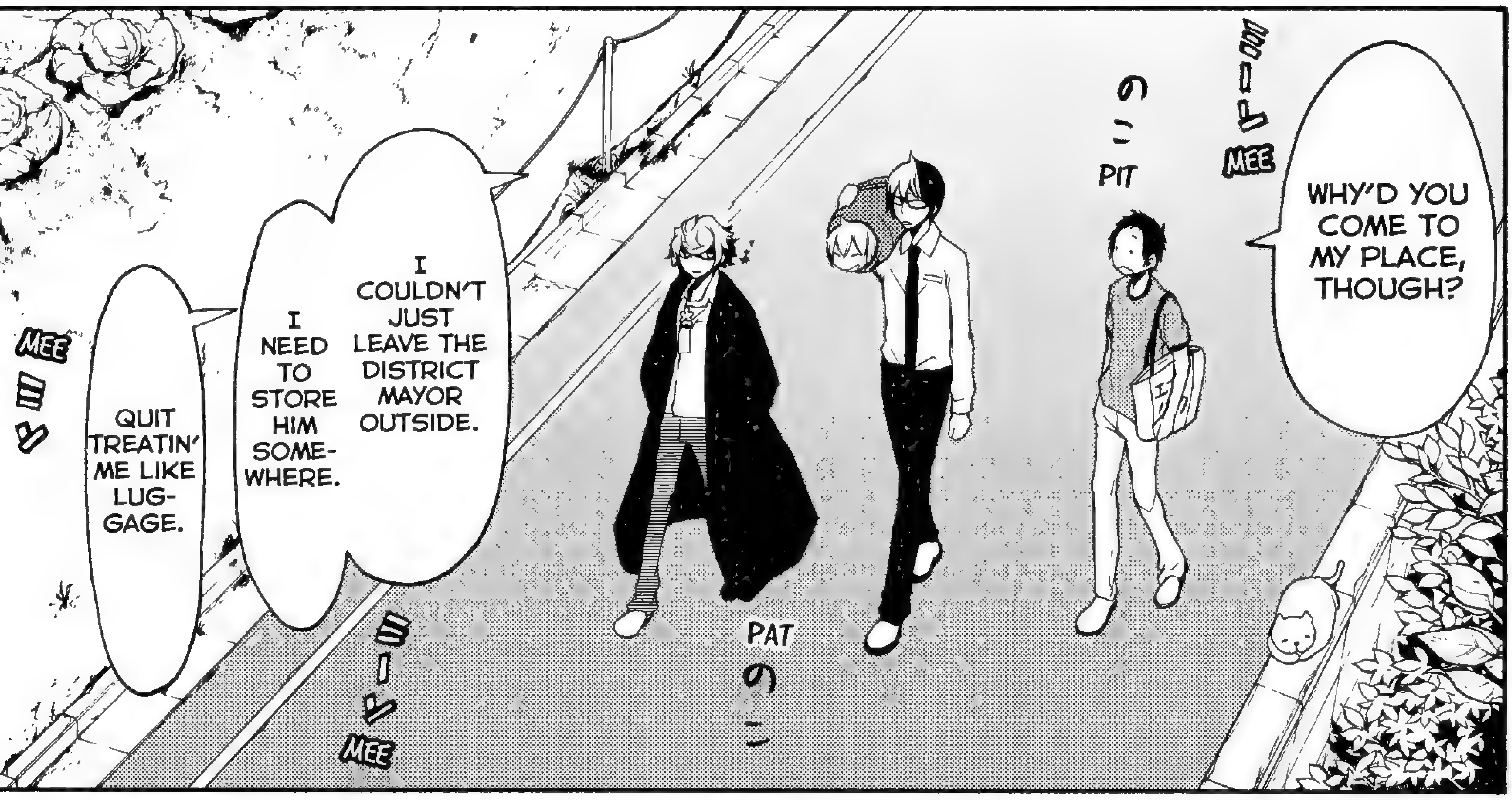
MMM…
じー…
STARE
ミーン
MEEEE
WHOA!
WHA?
HUH?!
MURA-SAKI?!
HEL-LO.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
I CAME OVER FOR LUNCH.
ミーン
MEE MEE
MEE
OH, YEAH. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO EAT?
I MIGHT AS WELL MAKE YOU SOMETHING YOU'VE NEVER HAD BEFORE WHILE WE'RE AT IT.
MEE
HOT POT…
…PLEASE.
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE
MEE

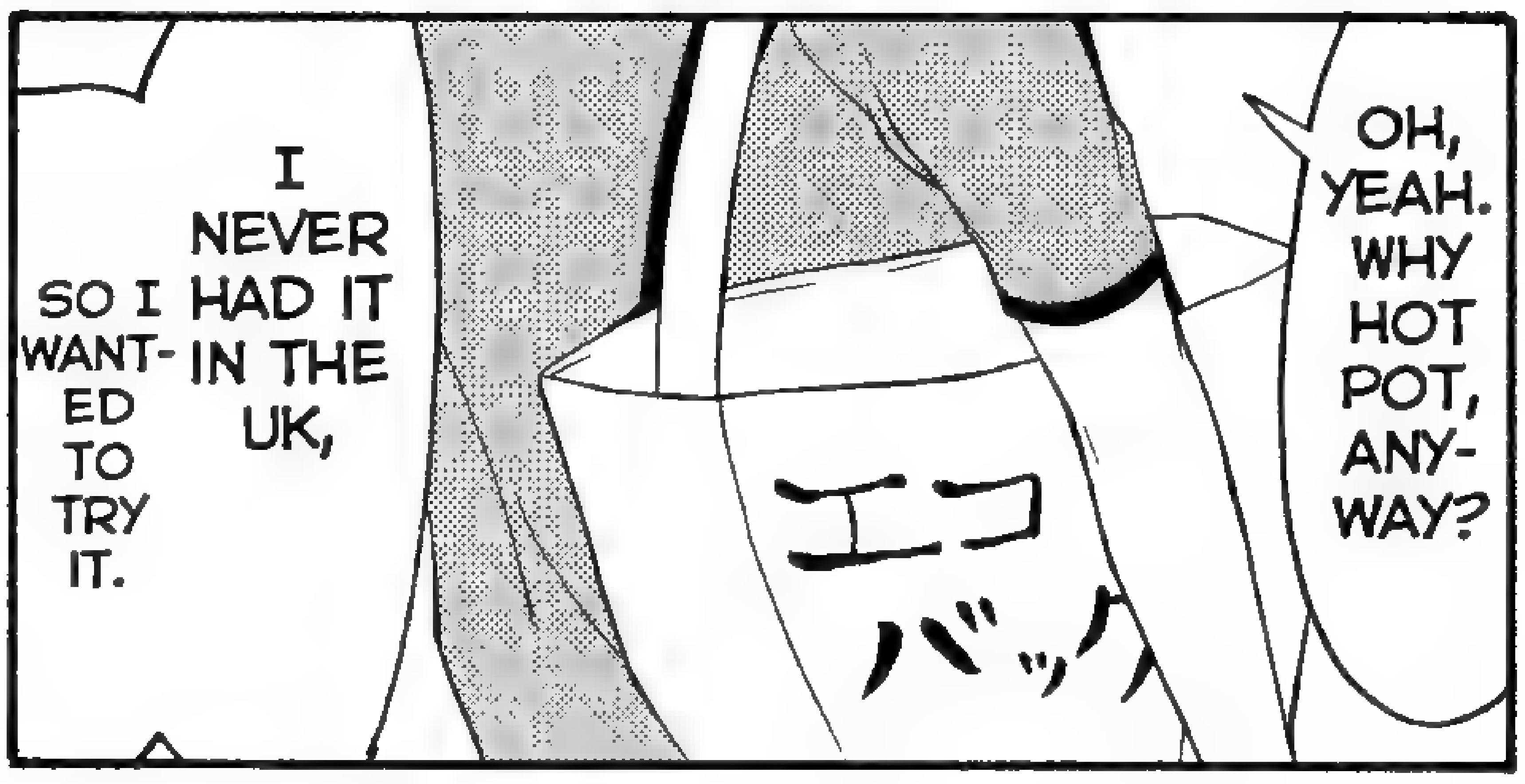
#97 BOYS

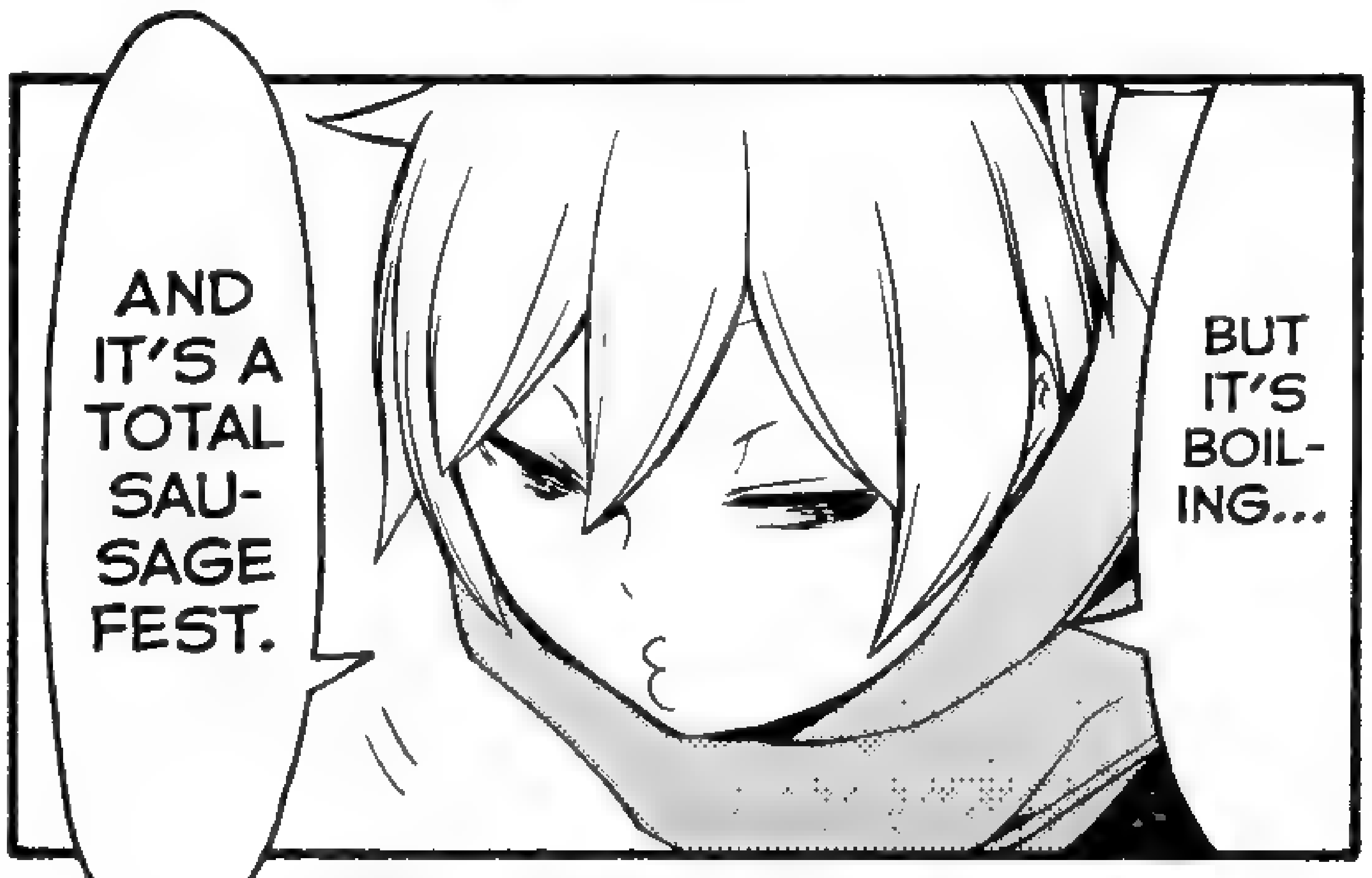
ミーン
MEE
ミーン
MEE
ミーン‥
MEE

YOU KNOW...
JAPANESE HOT POT...
ALL RIGHT, I GOT IT...
WELL, A PROMISE IS A PROMISE.
I MUST SAY, YOU'RE RATHER NEGLIGENT.
WELL... I WAS JUST HANGING OUT, SINCE THIS IS THE FIRST DAY OFF I'VE HAD IN A WHILE.
WEEEN
THEN MY AC BROKE.
I COULDN'T FIX IT AND JUST KINDA DOZED OFF...
BEEP
BEEP
HM.
SHALL I FIX IT FOR YOU? IT CAN'T BE THAT COMPLICATED OF A MACHINE.
REALLY?
THAT'D BE AWESOME...
ピンポーン
DING DONG


MEE ミーン
YOU CAN'T GO HOME BECAUSE THE GIRLS ARE HAVING A MEETING?
のこ PIT
のこ PAT
YEAH.
ミ MEE
ミ MEE

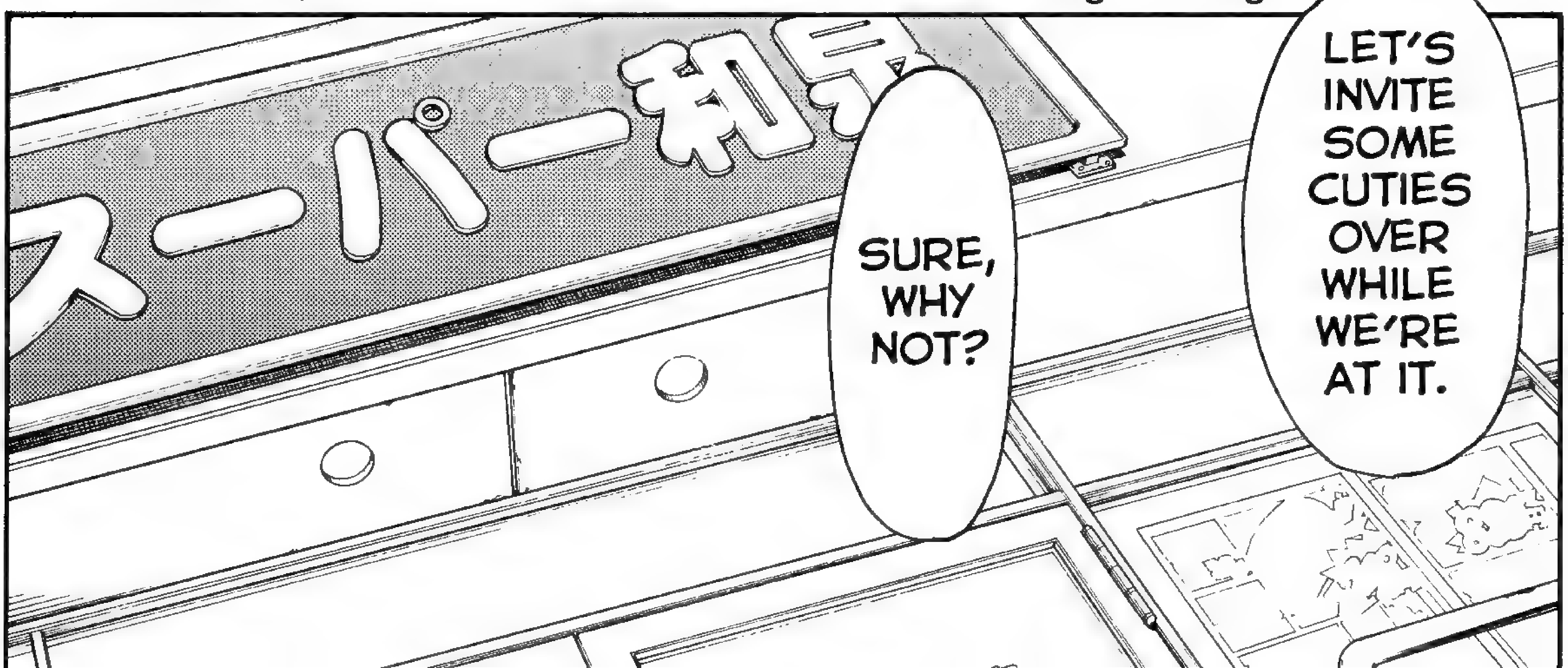

ミーン MEE
のこ PIT
WHY'D YOU COME TO MY PLACE, THOUGH?
I COULDN'T JUST LEAVE THE DISTRICT MAYOR OUTSIDE.
I NEED TO STORE HIM SOMEWHERE.
QUIT TREATIN' ME LIKE LUGGAGE.
PAT のこ
ミーン MEE
MEE ミン


OH, YEAH. WHY HOT POT, ANYWAY?
エコバッグ
I NEVER HAD IT IN THE UK,
SO I WANTED TO TRY IT.


BUT IT'S BOILING...
AND IT'S A TOTAL SAUSAGE FEST.

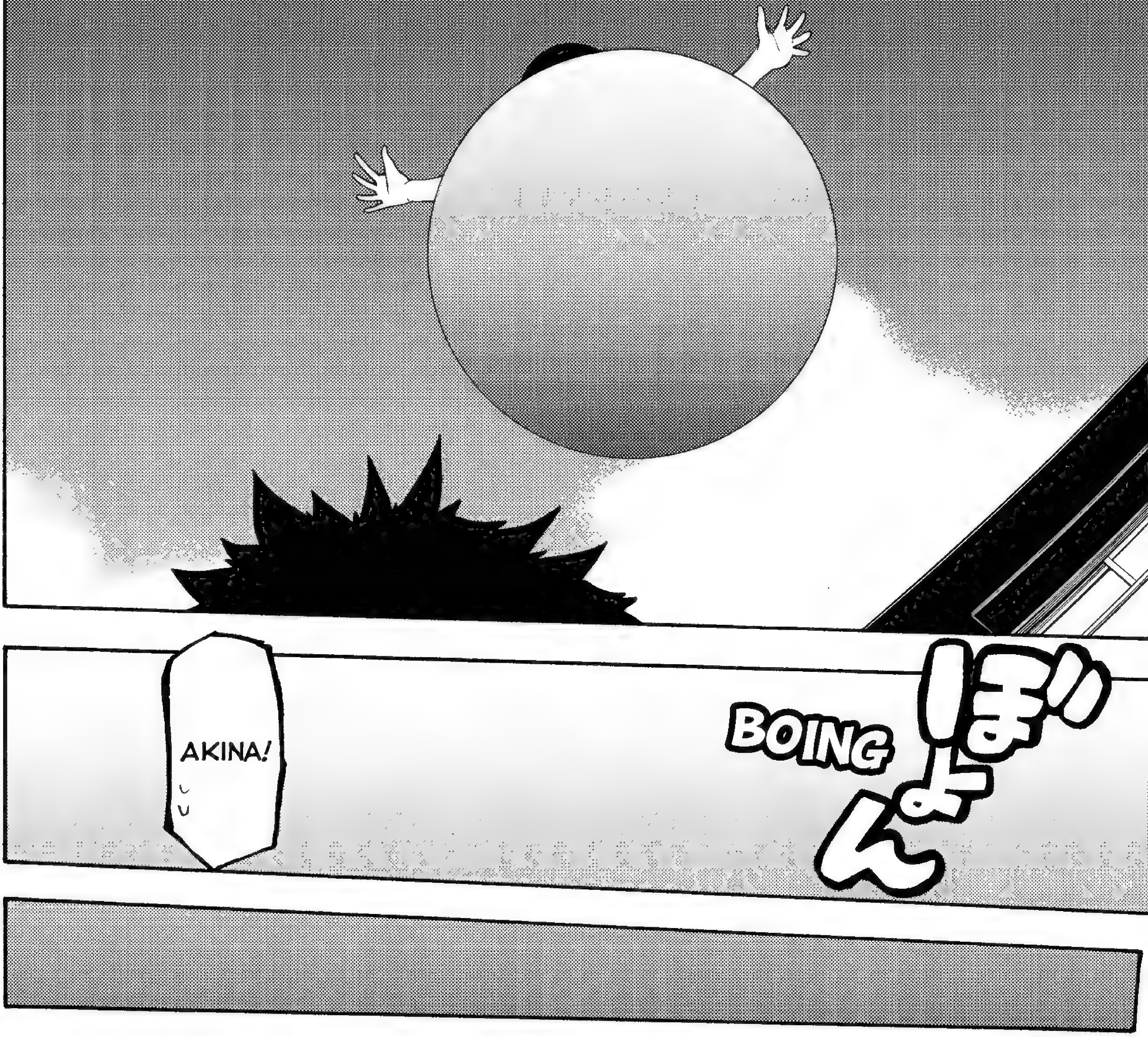
Sign: Supermarket Izumi

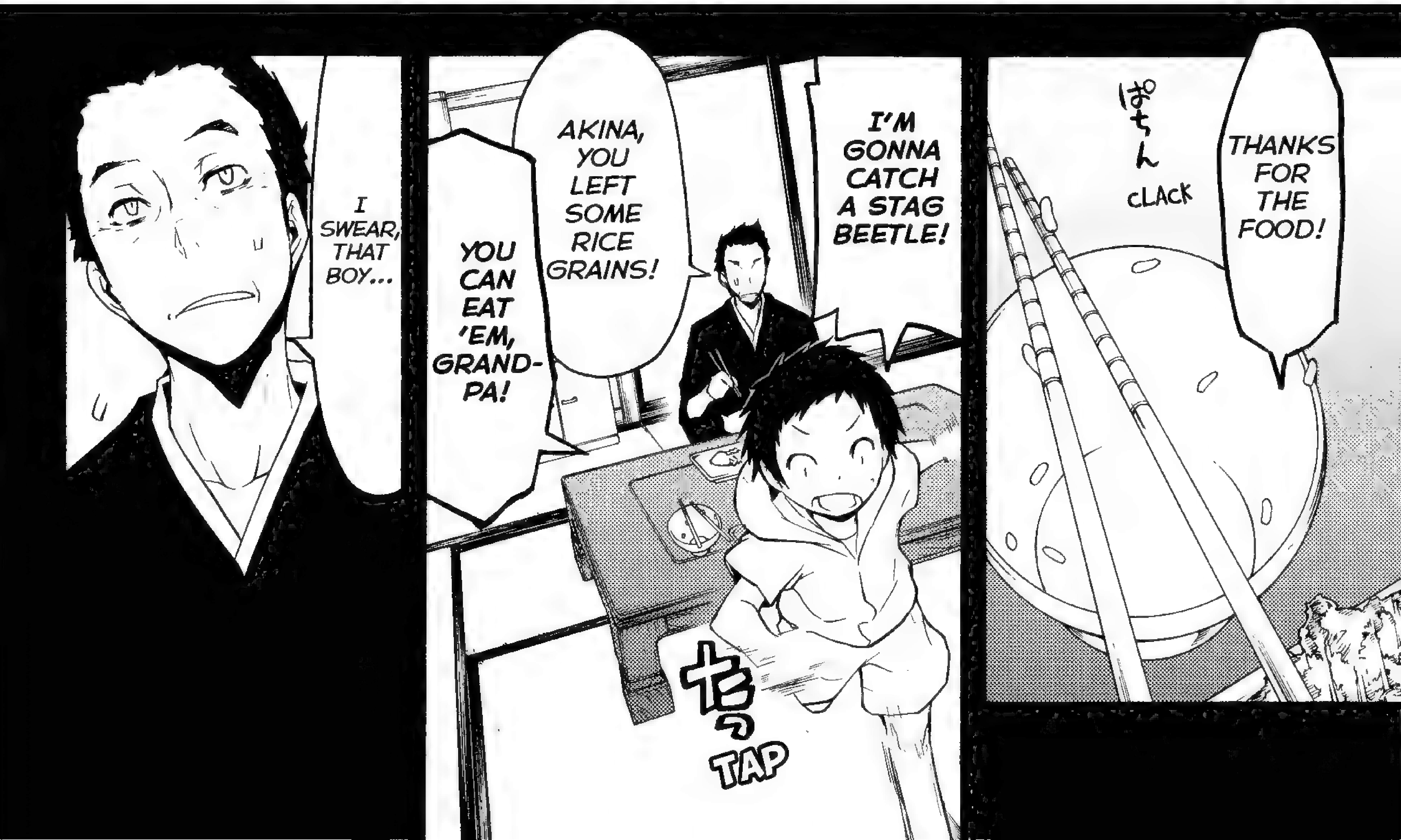
Bag: Eco bag


LET'S INVITE SOME CUTIES OVER WHILE WE'RE AT IT.
SURE, WHY NOT?
スーパー和泉

NOOO, THANK YOU!
WE'RE HAVING A GIRLS' NIGHT, YOU'RE HAVING A BOYS' NIGHT.
LET'S LEAVE IT AT THAT TODAY!
ALL RIGHT, MOVE OUT! SEE YA!
ずるずる
ZRR
WHAAAT? I WANNA EAT AKINA-SAN'S COOKING!
YOU'RE THE ONE COOKING TODAY!
...UH-OH.
SOLD OUT
NAPA CABBAGE
1玉 390 YEN
DO YOU NEED CABBAGE FOR HOT POT?
MMM... YOU CAN LEAVE IT OUT...

...BUT SINCE IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME HAVING IT, I THOUGHT WE'D GO TRADITIONAL.
MEEEE
I SEE.
IT'S A BIT OF A WALK, BUT LET'S SWING BY THE GROCER IN THE SHOPPING DISTRICT.
MEEEE
MEE
エコバッ
I USUALLY BUY PRODUCE THERE, ANYWAY.
WAIT.
WE FORGOT THE GREEN ONION, TOO.
OH, CRAP. I MUST BE SPACING OUT IN THIS HEAT.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO.
MIGHT AS WELL DO IT RIGHT.
IS HE THAT GOOD OF A COOK?
HE ALWAYS HAS BEEN.
YUP. MARIABELL THOUGHT SO, TOO.
SAID HE TREATS INGREDIENTS WITH RESPECT,
AND HOW THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF MAKING GOOD FOOD.
HOT...
WELL, THAT'S JUST HOW...
FYOOO


ぽよん
BOING
AKINA!


ぱちん
CLACK
THANKS FOR THE FOOD!
I'M GONNA CATCH A STAG BEETLE!
AKINA, YOU LEFT SOME RICE GRAINS!
YOU CAN EAT 'EM, GRAND-PA!
たっ
TAP
I SWEAR, THAT BOY...

...SAN.
AKINA-SAN!
AKINA-SAAAN!
OOP, HE CAME TO.
I'M FINE, ALL GOOD.
DID SOMETHING FALL ON ME?
むく
SIT
I'M SO SORRY!
SITTING ON THEIR KNEES
I WAS SPARRING WITH IRUKA-SAN, AND SHE SENT ME FLYING...
I'M SORRY...
AAAH!
TALK ABOUT OVERDOING IT.
I'M PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY PUNISHMENT...
GROPE
GROPE
GREAT! THAT'S AN ADMIRABLE MENTALITY.
SHOULD I CUT HER?
GO AHEAD.

AH, YER UP.
SKF
ず
WHAT A SORRY SIGHT.
WELL, GLAD YER ALL RIGHT.
THANKS FOR LETTING US BORROW THE SHADE!
NO PROBLEM.
OW, OW...
OLD MAN JINROKU,
DIDN'T YOU THROW OUT YOUR BACK LAST WEEK?
YEAH, AND IT STILL SMARTS...
I WANTED TO HARVEST ALL THESE TODAY BEFORE THEY SHRIVEL UP IN THIS HEAT.
AAH, GOOD POINT...
M'KAY.
ぱさ、
FLAP

I'LL DO IT.
KYOSUKE, GO ON AND TAKE THE GROCERIES HOME.
YOU NUMBSKULL! YOU WERE OUT COLD A SECOND AGO.
AND IN THIS HEAT? C'MON.
IT'S FINE. I'M STILL YOUNG.
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A SEAT AND DRINK SOME TEA, GRAMPS?
THANKS.
YER A GOOD KID, AKINA.
WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE AKINA TO IT ALONE. LET'S GO, MURASAKI.
RIGHT.
どろんっ
BA-DOOF
申
WE'LL HELP OUT, TOO!
I'LL JUST HAVE A SMOKE WHILE YOU ALL—
SNATCH
がしっ
申

Golem: Monkey

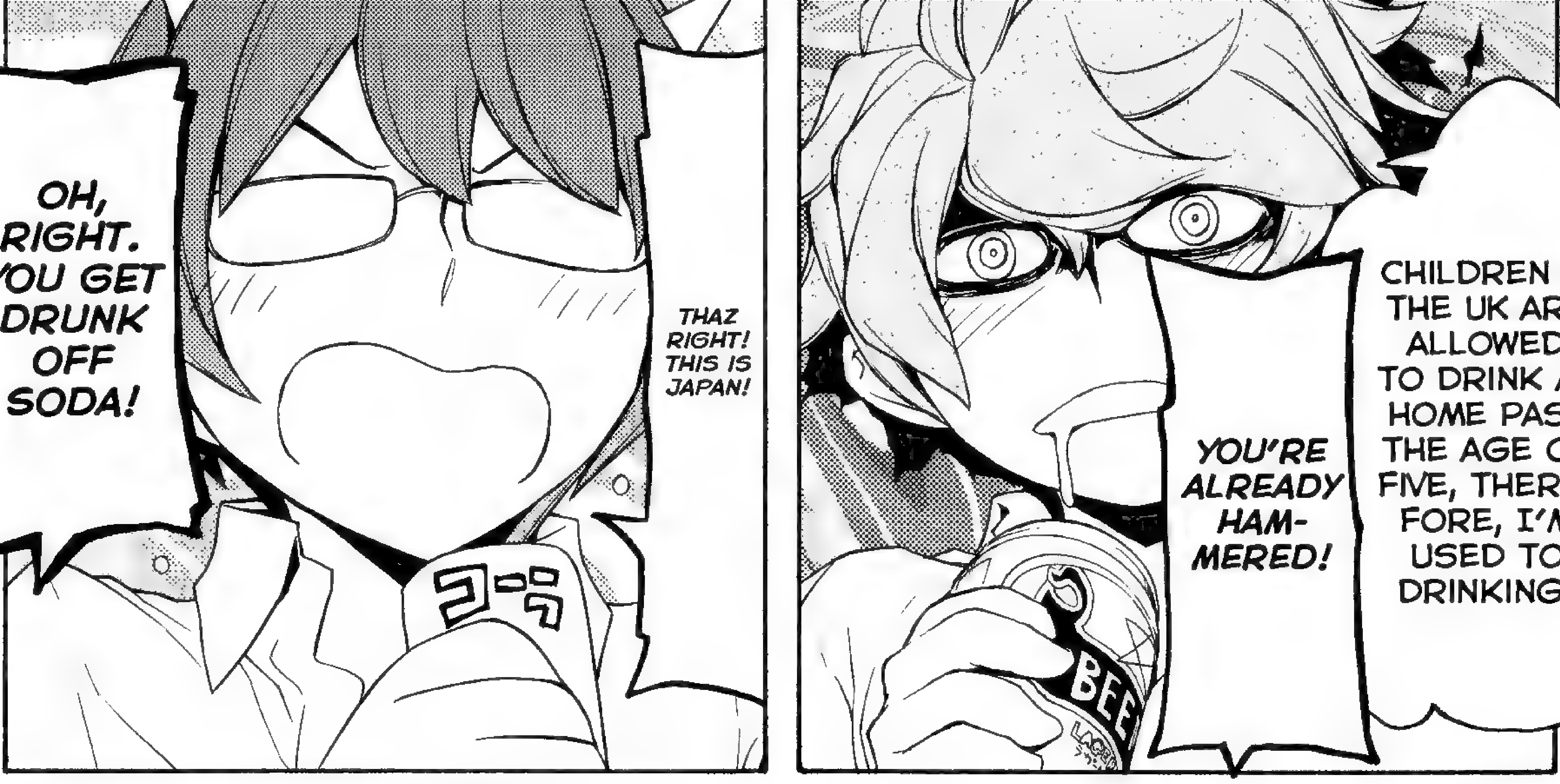
た
TAP
た
TAP
た
TAP
IT'S A MIYAMA!
...
た
TAP

AAAH! IT'S FINALLY OVER!
MAN, IT'S HOT!
MEE
MEE
THAT WAS MORE WORK THAN EXPECTED...
MEE
I'M GOING TO GO HOME AND TAKE A SHOWER.
OKAY. THANKS AGAIN!
THIS IS QUITE A GARDEN YOU HAVE HERE...
IT MAKES FOR GOOD CLAY.
THOUGH I TEND TO USE CLAY FROM RICE FIELDS MORE.
MIGHT BE BECAUSE I ALWAYS LIKED WORKIN' THE LAND.
THE MUSTARD SPINACH AND GREEN ONIONS STILL USE THE SAME ROOTS.
HUH...

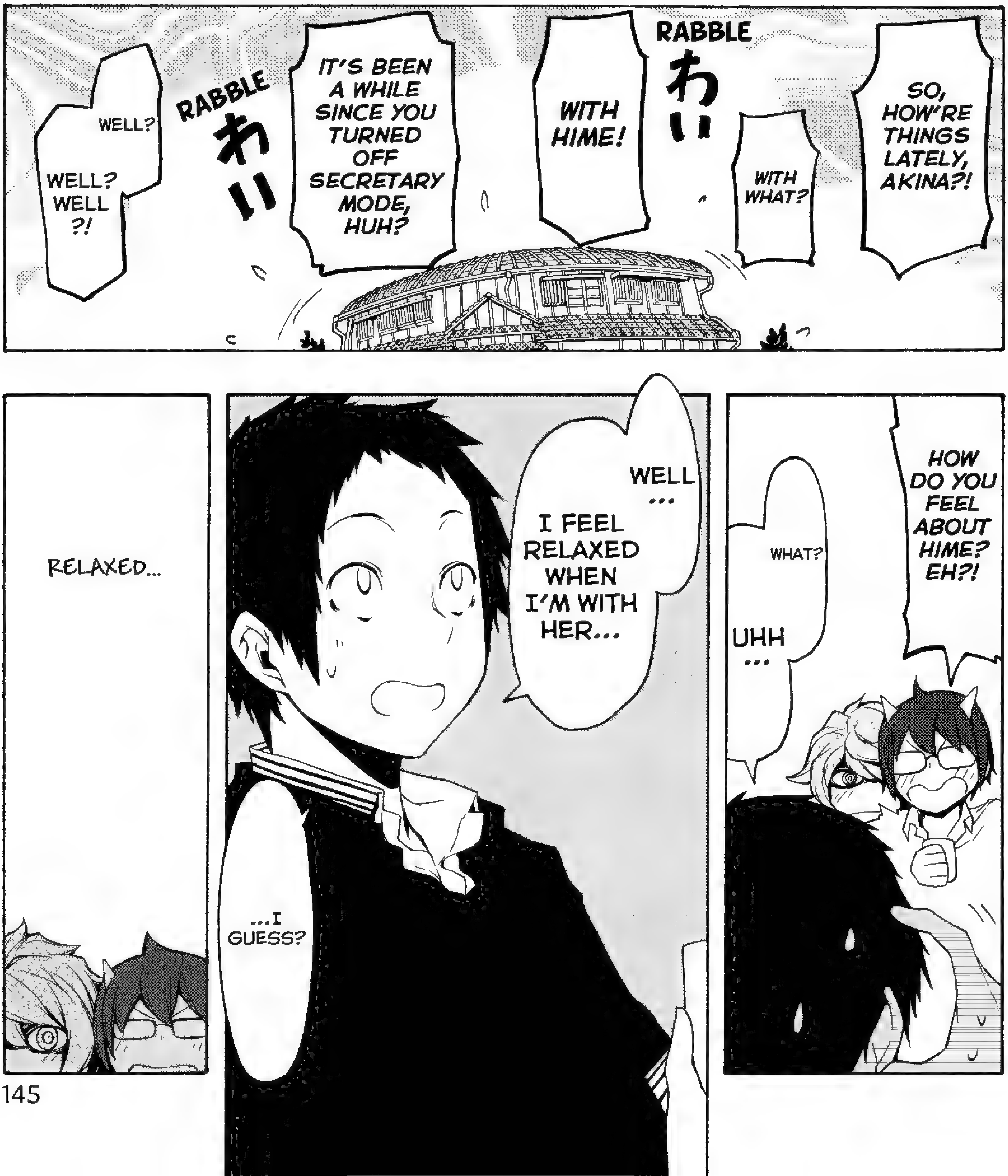
THEY KEEP GROWING BACK, RIGHT?
AS LONG AS THE ROOTS ARE INTACT.
LET'S SEE...
HERE, TAKE THESE.
FWUMP
THANKS!
WELL, I GUESS...
...WE GOT OUR VEGGIES.
YEAH...
I ONLY CAME TO BE TREATED TO A MEAL, SO HOW DID I GET WRAPPED UP IN THIS?
MEE
MEE
MEE
DON'T ASK.
I DON'T GET IT, EITHER.
MEEEE
SERIOUSLY...
WHY IS THE GOD TIRED...?
EVEN GODS GET EXHAUSTED...
MEEEE

AFTER ALL THIS WORK, I'M SURE...
...THIS HOT POT WILL TASTE EXQUISITE.
YOU BET YOUR ASS.
THEY SAY HUNGER IS THE BEST SPICE.
WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU, AKINA...
LEAVE IT TO ME.
I FEEL LIKE I CAN MAKE A SATISFYING DISH NOW...
かぽっ
POP
OOOH...

ぐつ
BLUB
ぐつ
BLUB
I- IT'S SO GOOD!
がつ OM
SATISFACTION IN A POT!
ANYTHING WOULD TASTE GOOD IN THIS! I COULD BOIL MY SHOE AND EAT IT!
がつ NOM
がつ NOM
IT'S SO GOOD, I COULD EAT MY CHOPSTICKS!
THEY'RE SOAKED WITH BROTH, BUT NO, DON'T!
がつ NOM
GULP, GULP, GULP...
THAT HITS THE SPOT!
ぷはー AHHH
WHEN DID YOU BUY BEER?!
BEER
HNGH...
IT'S SO GOOD.
DON'T CRY!
WELL, I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT.
THERE, THERE. DRINK UP!
ゴク GULP
ゴク GULP
BEER
HEY, YOU CAN'T DO THAT!


CHILDREN IN THE UK ARE ALLOWED TO DRINK AT HOME PAST THE AGE OF FIVE, THEREFORE, I'M USED TO DRINKING.
YOU'RE ALREADY HAMMERED!
BEE
THAZ RIGHT! THIS IS JAPAN!
OH, RIGHT. YOU GET DRUNK OFF SODA!
コーラ

Can: Soda

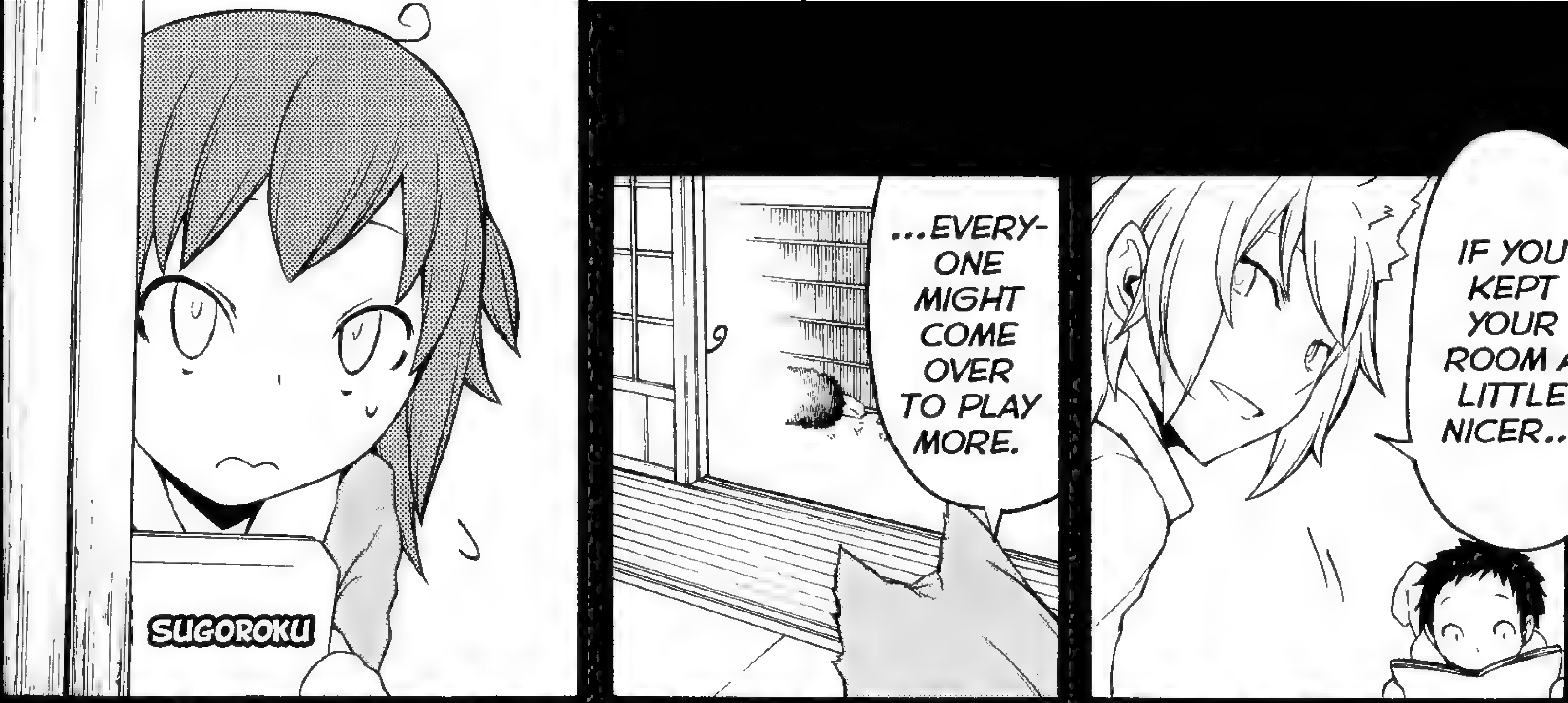

SO, HOW'RE THINGS LATELY, AKINA?!
WITH WHAT?
RABBLE
わい
WITH HIME!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU TURNED OFF SECRETARY MODE, HUH?
RABBLE
わい
WELL?
WELL? WELL?!
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT HIME? EH?!
WHAT?
UHH...
WELL...
I FEEL RELAXED WHEN I'M WITH HER...
...I GUESS?
RELAXED...

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME.
BEING WITH MARIABELL...
...MAKES ME FEEL RELAXED, TOO.
HOW ARE THINGS WITH TOMOE-SAN, KYOSUKE?
LET'S CHANGE THE SUBJECT.
GEH! TOMOE?!
STAY AWAY FROM HER! SHE'S SCARY AS HELL!
SNIFF... SHE SAID SHE'S GOING TO BE BUSY, SO SHE WON'T HAVE TIME TO TEXT FOR A WHILE...
SOUNDS ROUGH...
WHAT ABOUT YOU, MURASAKI?! YOU BETTER NOT BE MAKING ANY MOVES ON TOUKA!
WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN?

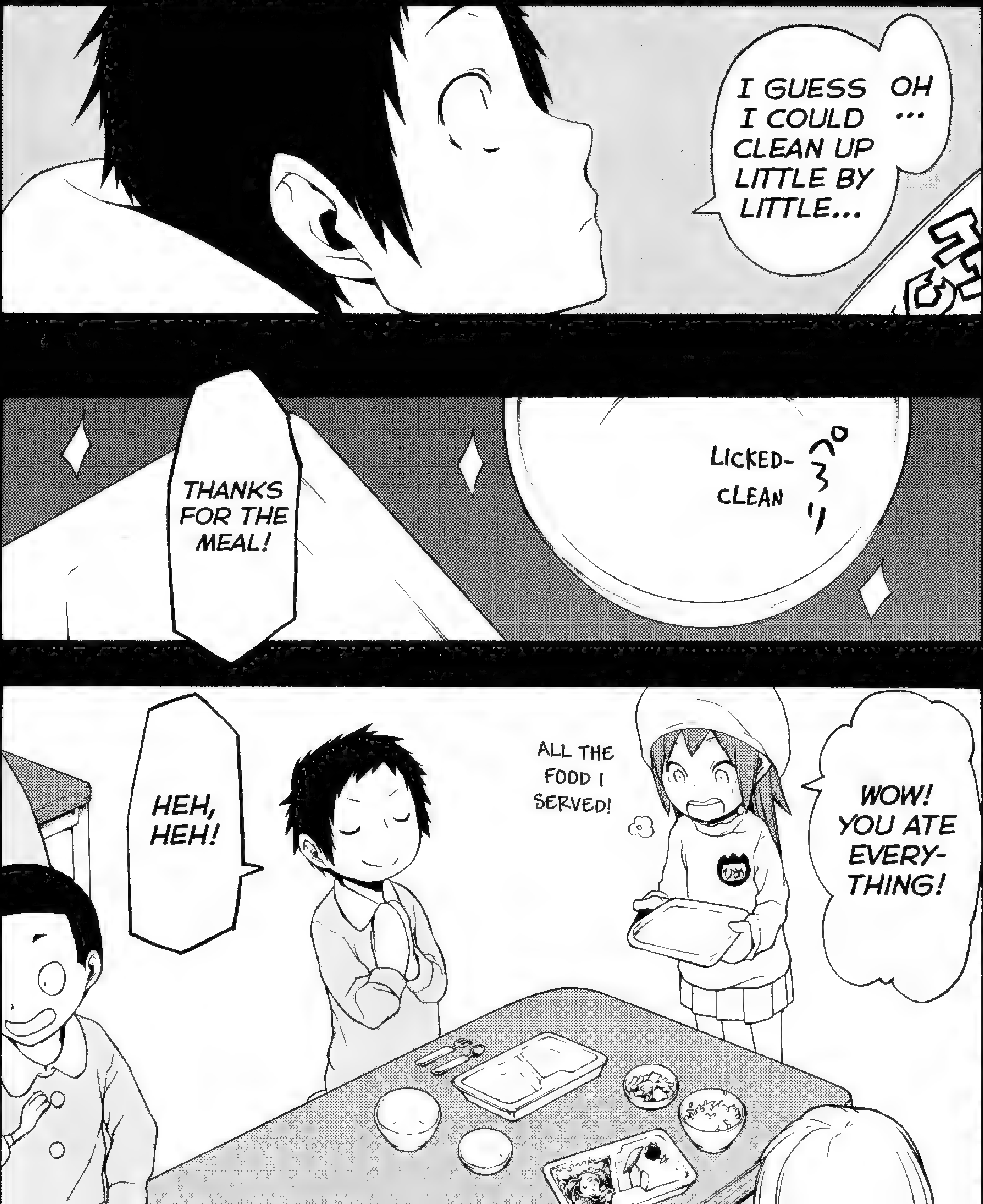
SHE HAS A VERY INTRIGUING BODY THAT ROUSES MY CURIOSITY...
YOU'VE GOT LOT OF NERVE SAYING THAT TO MY FACE!
RABBLE わい
RABBLE わい
GET HIM!
とん THUNK
すー… SNORE
I CAN'T... GO ON...
ぐ GRR
ぐ GRR
ぐ GRR
ぐ GRR
TAP た
TAP たっ

カッ
!
しっ
GRAB
A- AKI- NA...
ON THREE! ONE, TWO...
THANKS, AKINA...
NO PROBLEM. I ACTUALLY SAW YOU EARLIER BUT KEPT WALKING.
SORRY!
OH...
SNIFF
ぐす
I'M REALLY SORRY.
BUT I PROMISE THAT I'LL COME HELP YOU WHENEVER YOU'RE IN TROUBLE!
SO WHENEVER YOU NEED ME, JUST CALL!
OKAY.
THANKS, AKINA.
I LOVE YOU!

たっ、TAP
たっ、TAP
TAP たっ
HEEEY!
YOU WERE RIGHT. I'M GLAD I WENT BACK.
THANKS A LOT ...
...GIN!
I SEE.
THAT'S GOOD.
HEY, AKI-NA.
WHY DON'T YOU CLEAN UP YOUR ROOM?
MMM... TOO MUCH WORK.


IF YOU KEPT YOUR ROOM A LITTLE NICER...
...EVERYONE MIGHT COME OVER TO PLAY MORE.
SUGOROKU

*A type of Japanese board game similar to Snakes and Ladders


OH...
I GUESS I COULD CLEAN UP LITTLE BY LITTLE...
ぺろり
LICKED-CLEAN
THANKS FOR THE MEAL!
WOW! YOU ATE EVERYTHING!
ALL THE FOOD I SERVED!
HEH, HEH!

IT'S GOOD SHE WAS HAPPY, HUH, AKINA?
YEAH.
BUT Y'KNOW...
ALL THIS TIME...
...I'VE EATEN LIKE A PIG AND LEFT SO MUCH FOOD BEHIND.
LIKE YOU SAID, ANIMALS GIVE THEIR LIVES SO WE CAN EAT,
BUT I...
ALL THIS TIME, I...
MRR...
む〜...
AAH! AKINA'S CRYING!
N-NO, I'M NOT!

WHAT'D I TELL YOU?
HE'S A GOOD KID AT HEART.
AS LONG AS THE ROOTS ARE FIRM, EVERYTHING'LL BE FINE.
...YEAH.
BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN TO ANYTHING I SAID.
RAISING KIDS SURE IS HARD.
EVEN THOUGH HE'S MY GRANDKID.
YOU DUMBASS. WHO'D LISTEN TO ANYTHING US FOGIES SAY?
THE WORDS OF FRIENDS HIT HARDER THAN THE BABBLINGS OF OLD MEN.
THAT GOES FOR GOOD THINGS AND BAD.
LITTLE AKINA'S BEEN BLESSED WITH GOOD FRIENDS.
ぎん
あきな
...YEAH.
BUT I GOTTA SAY, HE'S JUST LIKE YOU WHEN YOU WERE A KID.
DROP IT...

...
SINCE OLDEN TIMES, *NABE* HAS BEEN SOMETHIN'...
...YOU GATHER 'ROUND WITH A BUNCH OF LIKE-MINDED FOLKS, YUCKING IT UP, EATIN', ENJOYIN'.
THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO EAT IT. ALWAYS HAS BEEN.

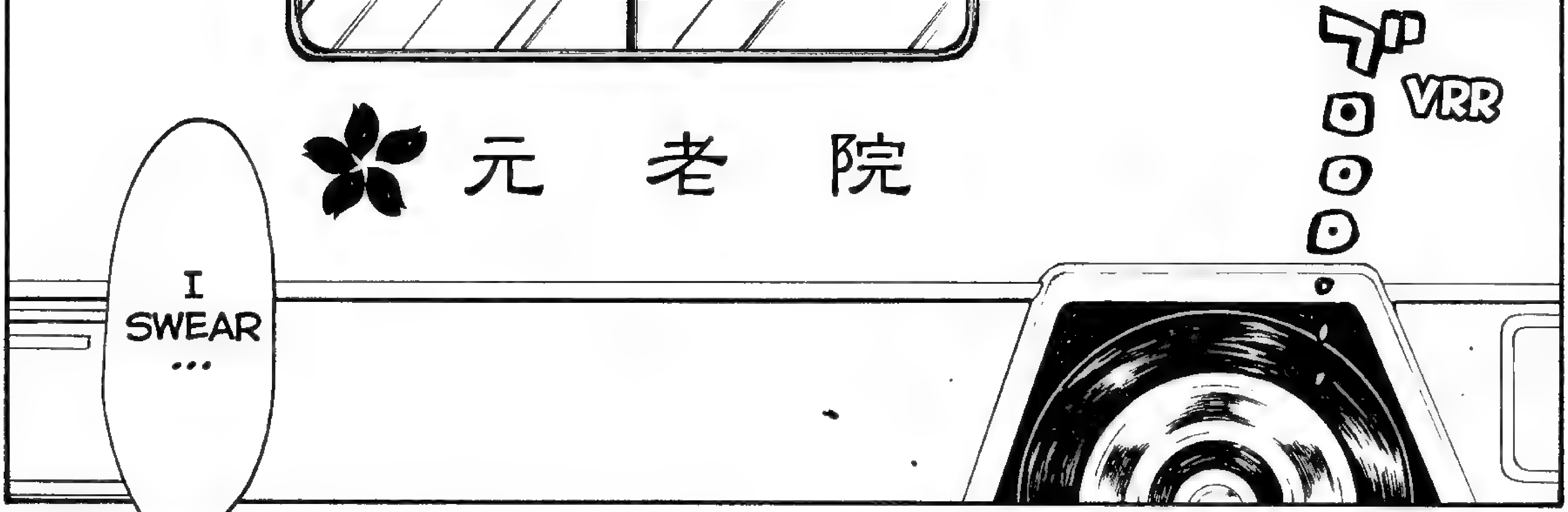
SO, IF THE SUMMER HEAT GETS TO YOUR HEAD,
AND YOU GO AND MAKE A PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR THE FRIENDS YOU WISH WERE HERE NOW, BUT AREN'T...
...NO ONE COULD BLAME YOU.
HE'S NOT HERE NOW...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
BUT...
BUT...
WELL, GIVE IT YOUR ALL.
I'M LOOKIN' FORWARD TO DRINKING WITH YOU *GUYS*.
GULP
BEFORE I KNOW IT, I'M THROWING THEM BACK WITH PEOPLE WHO I COULD'VE SWORN WERE BABIES A MINUTE AGO.
THAT'S MY PRIVILEGE OF LIVING IN THIS TOWN FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS.
NOT A BAD DEAL, RIGHT?

...GOT IT.
BUT Y'KNOW,
THINKIN' ABOUT IT LIKE THAT, I GUESS A DUDE FEST IS ALL RIGHT NOW AND THEN.
MEE
YEAH.
MEE
NOW...
ぐつ BLUB
ぐつ BLUB
ぐつ BLUB
...IF ONLY WE COULD DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT THIS HEAT.
WHY DON'T YOU HAVE THE AC ON?
BLUB
MEE
BLUB
BLUB
MEE
BLUB
MEE
BLUB
I SHOULD'VE HAD MURASAKI FIX IT BEFORE HE GOT DRUNK...

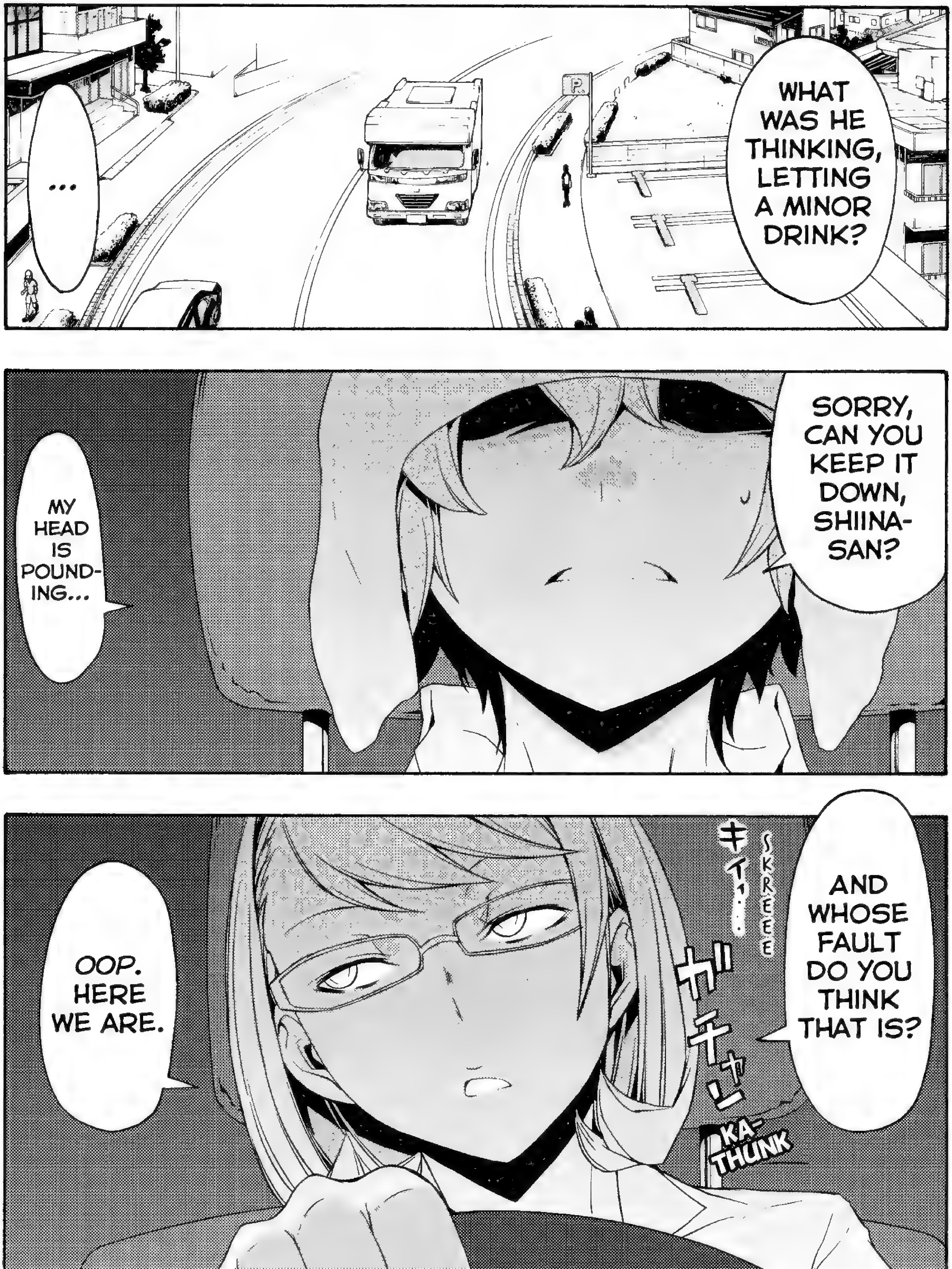
97th NIGHT BOYS END

YOZAKURA QUARTET 17

DRINKING IS FOR 21+ ONLY!


ブロロロ…
VRR
元老院
I SWEAR...

Van: Senate

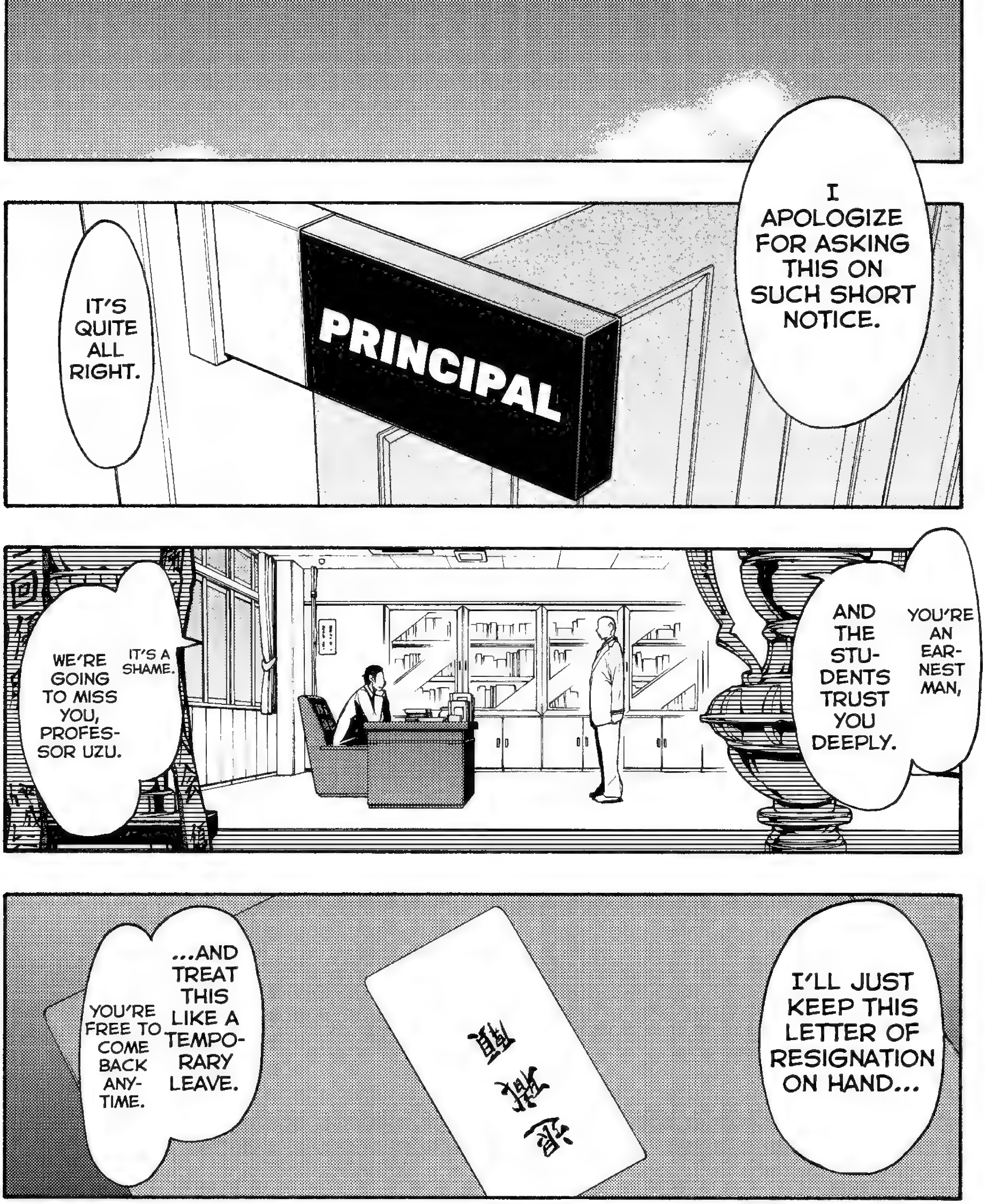

WHAT WAS HE THINKING, LETTING A MINOR DRINK?
...
SORRY, CAN YOU KEEP IT DOWN, SHIINA-SAN?
MY HEAD IS POUNDING...
AND WHOSE FAULT DO YOU THINK THAT IS?
キィ…
SKREEE
ガチャン
KA-THUNK
OOP. HERE WE ARE.

ARE WE BACK AT THE SENATE?
NOT YET. WE'RE PICKING SOMEONE UP FIRST.
UGH...
HEY, DON'T GO PUKING ALL OVER THE PASSENGER SEAT.
WHY DON'T YOU LIE DOWN IN THE BACK?
...I'LL DO THAT.
SHEESH. WHAT ON EARTH WAS THAT BRAT THINKING?
バタンッ
THUD
DOES HE HAVE ANY IDEA...
...WHAT DAY IT IS?

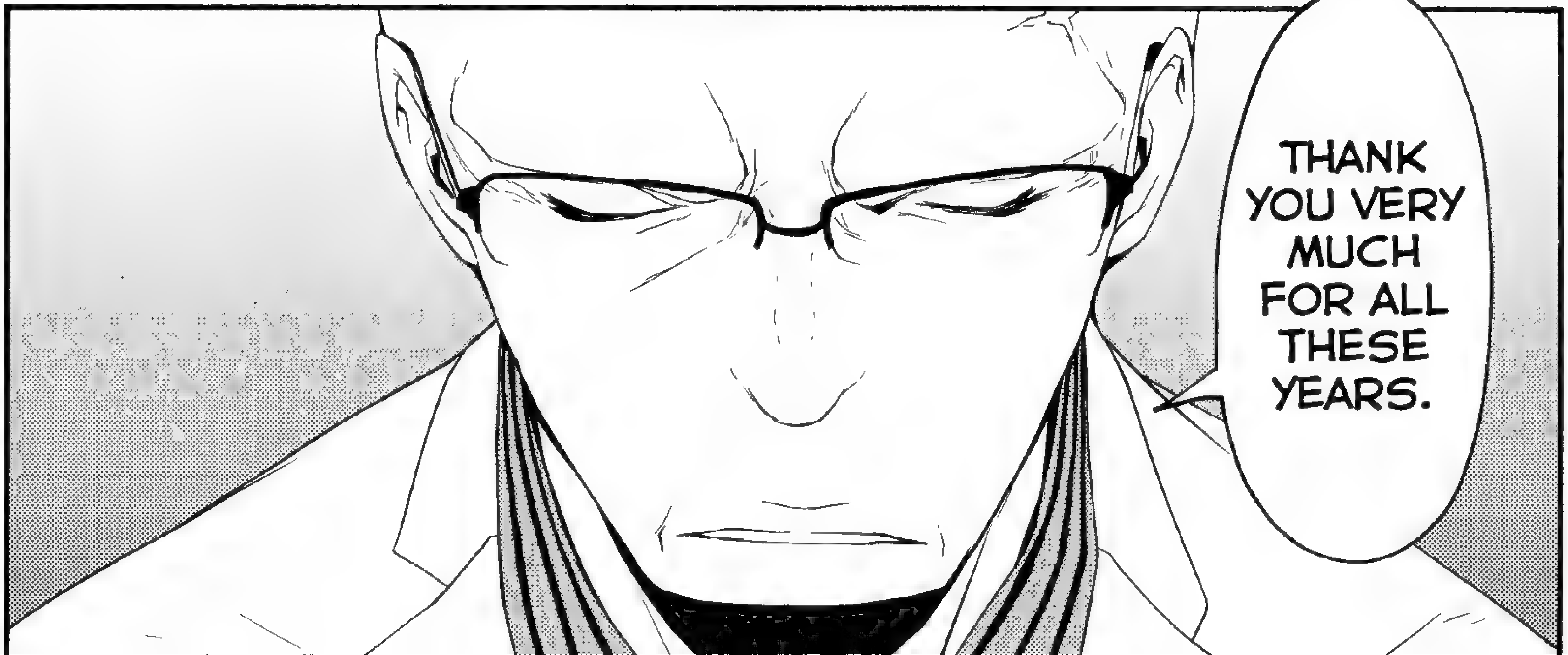
#98 PLEDGE FLOWER

THIS IS THE LAST DAY MEMBERS OF THE SENATE...
...GET TO GO OUTSIDE.

UZU, YOU HAVE A TEACHING LICENSE, DON'T YOU?
START TEACHING AT A SCHOOL IN SAKURASHIN FROM NEXT MONTH ON.
...HUH?
ERR... WHAT?
THE SENATE IS GOING TO START SENDING PEOPLE TO DO DEMON EXAMINATIONS IN SAKURASHIN.
IT'LL BE EASIER TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU IF YOU'RE STATIONED THERE, RIGHT?
SLIDE
PLUS, SOMEONE NEEDS TO KEEP AN EYE ON THOSE KIDS.
WHO BETTER THAN A TEACHER?
SOMEWHERE WITH PLENTY OF DEMONS WOULD BE GOOD. AHA. HERE.
カタ
TAK
カタ
TAK
A GIRLS' HIGH-SCHOOL WITH 80% DEMON STUDENTS.
A GIRLS' SCHOOL ?!


I APOLOGIZE FOR ASKING THIS ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.
PRINCIPAL
IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT.
YOU'RE AN EARNEST MAN,
AND THE STUDENTS TRUST YOU DEEPLY.
IT'S A SHAME.
WE'RE GOING TO MISS YOU, PROFESSOR UZU.
I'LL JUST KEEP THIS LETTER OF RESIGNATION ON HAND...
退職願
...AND TREAT THIS LIKE A TEMPORARY LEAVE.
YOU'RE FREE TO COME BACK ANYTIME.

Letter: Letter of Resignation


THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ALL THESE YEARS.

HEY.
WOO!
PASS IT HERE!
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, BUT IT WENT BY IN A FLASH.
SINCE YOU STARTED TEACHING?
YES.

AT FIRST, IT WAS TO MONITOR THE TOWN,
BUT OVER TIME, THE JOY OF TEACHING GAVE ME A SENSE OF FULFILLMENT.
I WOULD BE LYING IF I SAID I HAVE NO REGRETS.
...
PROFESSOR UZU! YOU'RE WORKING, EVEN THOUGH IT'S SUMMER?
YES.
I SEE YOU'RE ALL WORKING HARD.
BE SURE TO STAY HYDRATED.
I CAN'T LET MYSELF GET SENTIMENTAL.
THIS IS THE LAST DAY THE SENATE IS ALLOWING US TO GO OUTSIDE.
I MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE IN GOOD ORDER.
THIS IS MY LAST INSPECTION.
WALK WITH ME, WON'T YOU?
サラ SKRIT
サラ SKRIT
...ALL RIGHT.

SHOULDN'T YOU GO?
WHERE TO?
LUCY IS CALLING FOR YOU, ISN'T SHE?
SHE HASN'T RETURNED YET, IT SEEMS.
I SEE.
DEMON EXAMS, HUH?
...
WHY THE LONG FACE?
WE CLAIM IT'S FOR THE GOOD THE DEMONS,
BUT IN REALITY, IT'S ONLY IN THE INTEREST OF HUMANITY.
I'M NOT SURE IF WHAT WE'RE DOING IS THE RIGHT THING.

TALK ABOUT SERIOUS.
SURE YOU'RE CUT OUT FOR THIS?
...
YOU SEEMED LIKE YOU WERE HAVING FUN WHEN YOU TRAINED TO BE A TEACHER IN COLLEGE.
MAYBE THAT LINE OF WORK'S MORE UP YOUR ALLEY.
EDUCATION, HUH?
JUST SAYIN' THAT'S ANOTHER ROUTE.
YOU'RE GONNA GET WRINKLES IF YOU MOPE AROUND ALL DAY.
THAT'S JUST HOW I AM.
THANKS FOR THE COFFEE.
TNK
HEADING TO LUCY'S?
NOT YET.
I'M GOING TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE DEMON EXAMS FIRST.

SAWAKI, YOU GOT A NEW BEST TIME!
AAH... TOO HOT...
...HM?
?
しー...
SHH

WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING.
ガラ
SLIDE
ガラ
SLIDE
...THIS IS OUR LAST STOP.
HM.

THE GYMNASTICS CLUB, HUH?
THEY DIDN'T EVEN CLEAN UP...
ぐにっ
GRAB
THEY'RE PROBABLY JUST TAKING A BREAK.
I'M SURE THEY'LL BE BACK SOON... *HUP.*
す
SWISH
...HOW DEXTROUS.
I'M AN ALUMNUS FROM HERE.
SO ARE JURI...
ぽんっ
TOSS
...AND NADESHIKO.
ぽん
PNT

I'LL NEVER FORGET.
YOU WERE MY FIRST STUDENTS AS A TEACHER.
A TRIO OF TROUBLEMAKERS.
ひょい FWIP
OH, YEAH?
ひょい FWIP
WELL, IT WASN'T JUST YOU THREE.
THAT GOES FOR EVERY BATCH OF STUDENTS.
EVEN NOW, I'M SURROUNDED BY TROUBLEMAKERS.
ALL RIGHT, ALL DONE...
バタン THUD
TMP
んっ FWOO

すとん
FWUMP
!
...ALL DONE?
HEY... GET DOWN.
YOU SAID YOU'D LEAVE THIS PLACE IN GOOD ORDER.
ISN'T THERE SOMETHING LEFT FOR YOU TO SETTLE?

SET-TLE?
YOU STILL HAVEN'T MADE GOOD...
...ON YOUR PROMISE FROM YEARS AGO.
A VERY IMPORTANT PROMISE...
SQUEEZE
...I'VE KEPT LOCKED IN MY HEART ALL THIS TIME.
KNOCK IT OFF.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AW, COME ON.
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

EVERYTHING.
YEOW!
YANK
JOLT
WHA ?! ?!

HERE!
THANK YOU FOR ALL THE CHECK-UPS!
NO... I'M JUST DOING MY JOB.
THERE'S NO NEED TO THANK ME...
UH-UH!
I GOT A HAT!
EVERYONE'S KINDA SCARY,
BUT YOU'RE REALLY NICE, MISTER.
ALSO...
SO...
...YOU'RE CUTE!
CUTE...

...WHEN I GROW UP, I'M GONNA MARRY YOU.
ME, MIDORIKO-CHAN!
BEAM
にま〜
MAR—
DON'T WANT TO?
...
...NO, NOT THAT.
THANK YOU.
IF YOU STILL HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ONCE YOU'VE GROWN UP...
...I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.
OKAY!

UUH...
はらはら
WHIMPER
I'D NEVER FORGET!
HOW COULD YOU, UZU-CHAN?!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS THE LAST DAY I GET TO SEE YOU...
うわ～ん
WAAAH
I NEVER WOULD'VE KNOWN IF SHIINA-SAN HADN'T TOLD ME.
♪

わ～ん WAAAH
わ～ん WAAAH
EVEN SO...
...I AM A TEACHER, AND YOU ARE A STUDENT.
TEACHER? STUDENT?
THAT DOESN'T MATTER!
IT DOES.
IT'S A MATTER OF MAINTAINING MY DIGNITY...
...AS AN EDUCATOR.
...

... FINE.
THEN COME BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER YOU FINISH WHAT YOU NEED TO.
WILL YOU AT LEAST PROMISE ME...
...THAT YOU'LL COME BACK?
...
A PROMISE FOR AFTER OCTOBER...

ばしっ
SLAP
はらはら
WHIMPER
・・・ふっ
...HMPH.
ALL RIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE I'VE MADE ANOTHER PROMISE.
ONCE EVERYTHING IS OVER, I PROMISE I'LL COME BACK.
YOU HAVE MY WORD.

BEAM
ぽーっ
'KAY!
OH, BUT WAIT...
YOU'RE ON LEAVE NOW, RIGHT?
THEN THAT MEANS...
...WE'RE NOT A STUDENT AND TEACHER ANYMORE!
YAY! GIMME A KISS, UZU-CHAN!
C'MON!
チューウ チュウ チュ チュ
PECK PECK PECK
WHA?! CUT THAT OUT!
I SAID KNOCK IT OFF!
COME ON, WHAT'S THE PROB-LEM?
OH!

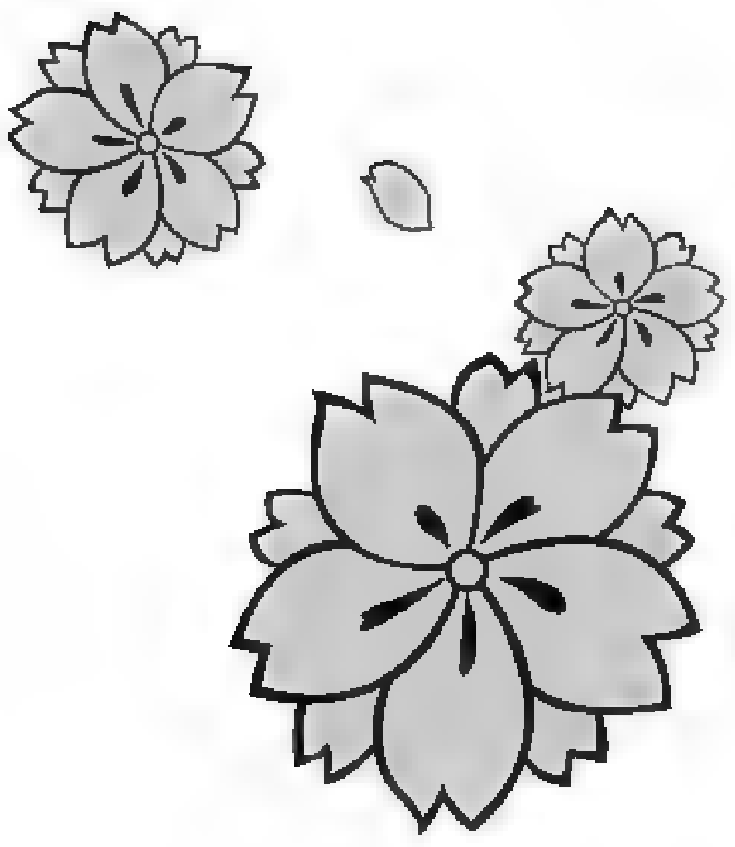
IS IT BECAUSE SHIINA-SAN'S WATCHING? OKAY! I'LL JUST USE MY RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS SKILLS TO–
HEY!
ゅ
るん
FWISH
ひょい
LIFT
ぱ
SWAP
ん
WHA–
ギュ
W
ー
HWAH!
ゆ
R
る
R
る
R
る
L

YOU KNOW I GRADUATED FROM HERE, RIGHT?
HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD TALES OF A LEGENDARY GYMNASTICS CLUB MEMBER?
ぴしっ SNAP
ぱさっ FLAP
THE ONE WHO JOINED THE SENATE?
DON'T TELL ME...
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU HAVE A LOT OF NERVE DOING THAT WHILE WEARING MY FACE.
FWOO ブン
ブン FWOO
TIME FOR A LESSON!
HELP MEEE!
I'LL BE IN THE CAR.
みろはす MIROHAS

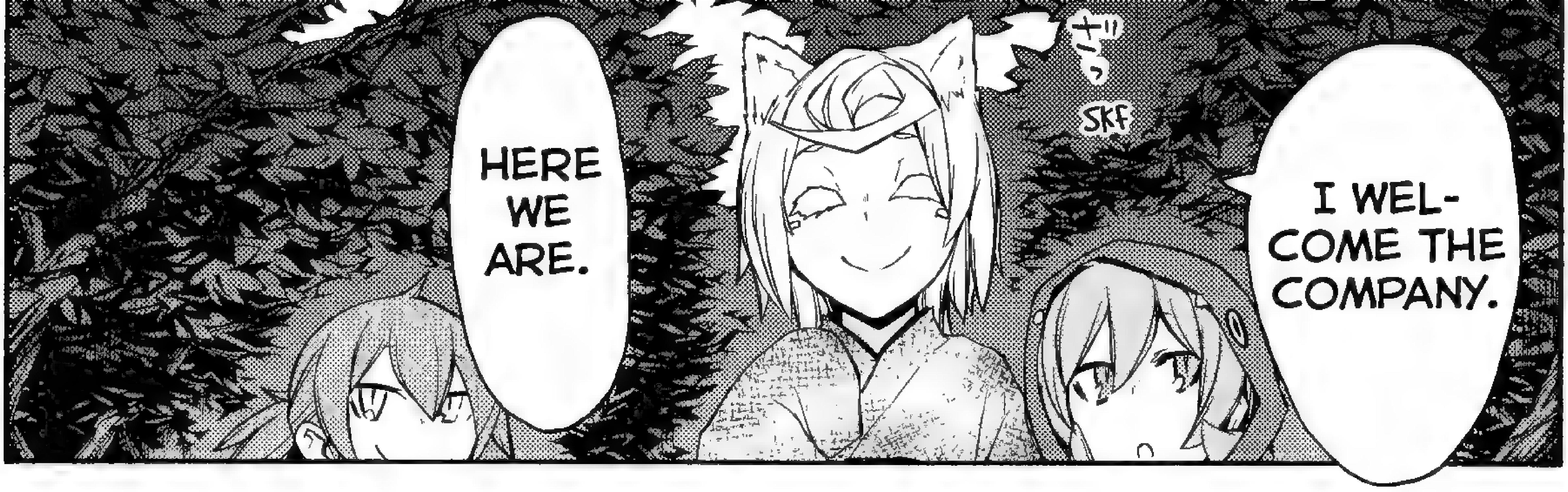
YOU LOOK AWFUL.
WHAT HAPPENED?
IT'S NOTHING...
PHEW.
ALL DONE?
THAT REMINDS ME, ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THOSE TWO BEFORE WE GO BACK?
バタン
THNK
FLICK
Nadeshiko
There you have it.
Juri
Roger! I'm in Hakone right now!
I'll call you once October's over~
IT'S FINE.
I'LL SEE THEM AGAIN.
SNAP
VRUM
I SEE...
THNK
SQUEE
LET'S BE ON OUR WAY.
M'KAY.
CLOSE THE DOOR, MURASAKI.
I KNOW...
SQUEE

WELL, THEN. I SUPPOSE...
THUD
元老院
SENATE
...THIS IS FAREWELL FOR NOW.

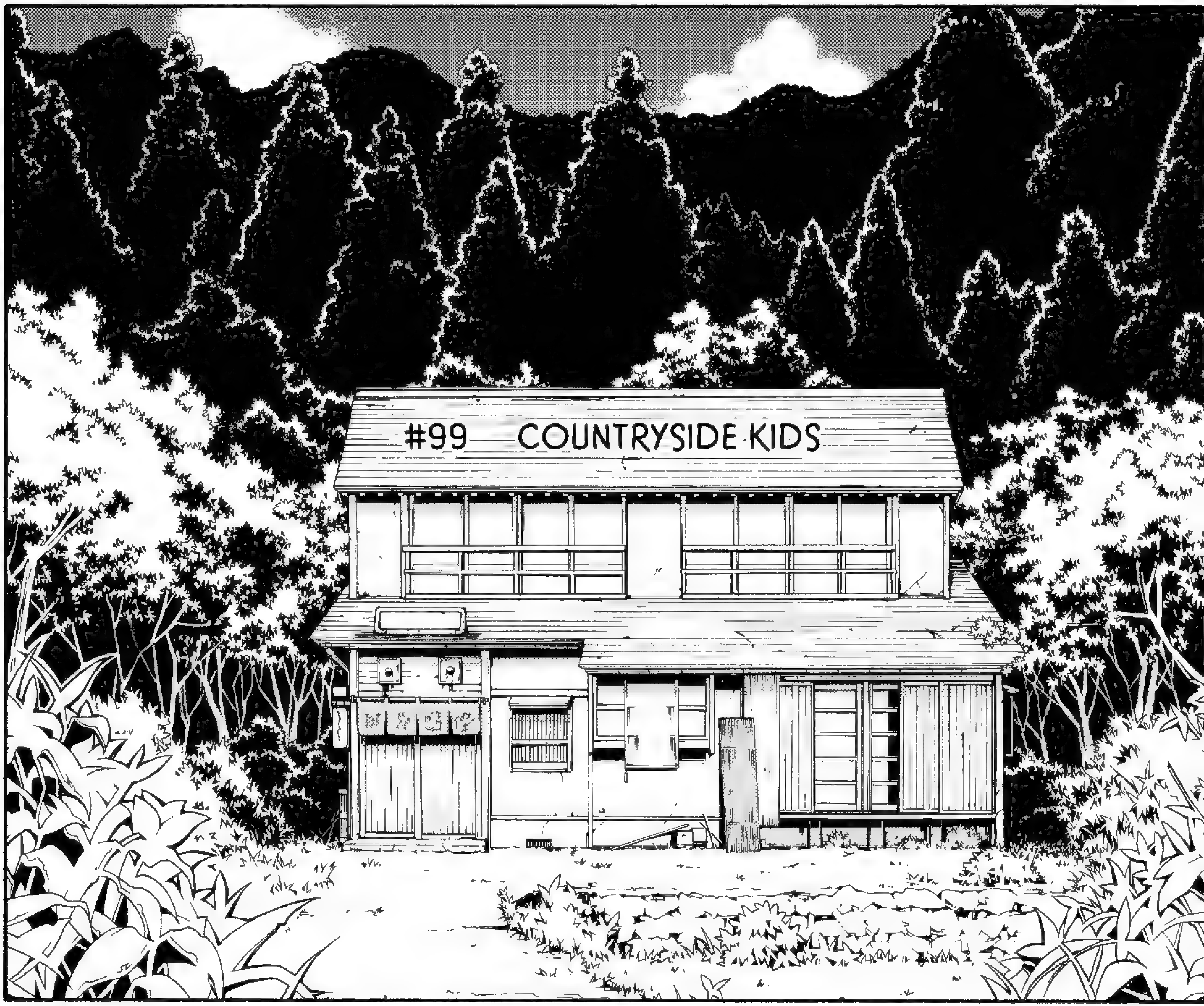
98TH NIGHT PLEDGE FLOWER END

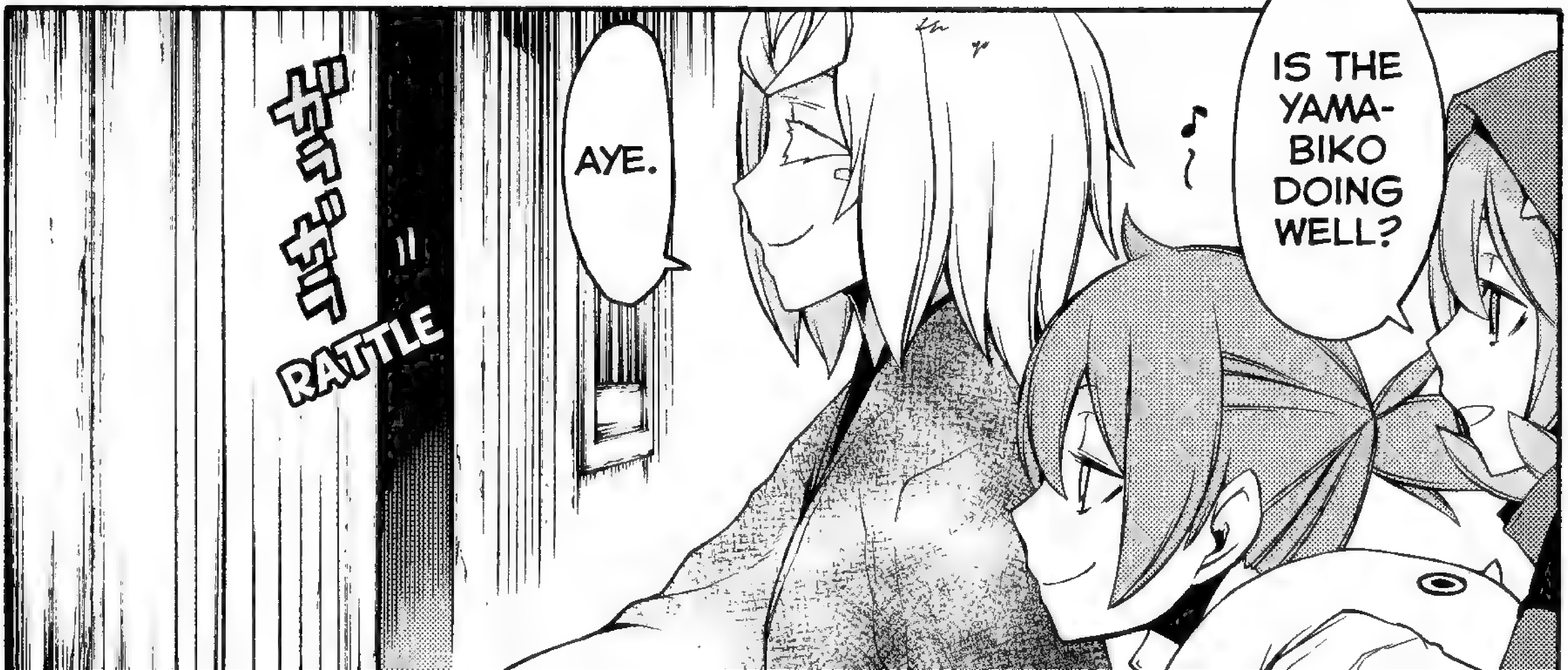


VRRR
ブルルル…
ALL RIGHT. THEY'RE IN YOUR HANDS.
MEEEE
AYE. LEAVE THEM TO ME.
MEE
MEE
SEE YA, SHIDOU! DON'T CRASH!
DRIVE SAFE!
LET'S STOP BY A HOT SPRING ON OUR WAY BACK!
I WONDER IF THERE'S ANYWHERE THAT OFFERS MIXED BATHING...
FU FU
I'VE GOT THE LATE SHIFT AFTER THIS...
WILL WE MAKE IT BACK IN TIME?
SUCKS SPENDING SUMMER BREAK COOKIN' IN TOKYO!
THE INN MIGHT BE RUNDOWN, BUT IT'S THE MOUNTAINS!
MINA...
巴の宿
TOMOE'S INN
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
HOT SPRINGS ARE DESERTED IN THE SUMMERTIME.


I WELCOME THE COMPANY.
ざっ
SKF
HERE WE ARE.

#99 COUNTRYSIDE KIDS




IS THE YAMABIKO DOING WELL?
♪~
AYE.
ガラッガラ
RATTLE

スッ
SWIF
!
WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.
THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE JOURNEY TO OUR HUMBLE INN.
OOH...
HOW PROPER.
?

ビャー!
NYAAAAH!
MY LEG'S ASLEEP!
THERE GOES THAT!
DON'T TELL ME YOU WERE SITTING THE WHOLE TIME...
I'M SORRY TO MAKE YOU HELP OUT.
IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO FOR BEING ALLOWED TO STAY HERE...
OOOH! IT'S SO FLUFFY!
つめ RUFF
つめ RUFF
せっせ せっせ HUSTLE HUSTLE
ぴっしり NEAT

WOW! IT'S LAID OUT SO NEATLY!
BET IT'LL FEEL REAL GOOD TO SLEEP IN THAT!
BEAM
TNK TNK
I'M A LITTLE SURPRISED.
THAT SHE'S WORKING SO HARD?
YEAH. AND THAT SHE REALLY SEEMS TO HAVE IT TOGETHER.
SHE'S AN EARNEST GIRL AT HEART.
SHIDOU WAS A HARD WORKER, TOO, ALBEIT CLUMSY.
I DON'T KNOW HOW HE SURVIVED IN THE WILD.
YOUNG SHIDOU.
WOW! SHIDOU-CHAN WORKED HERE, TOO?

WILD DEMONS WHO ARE *TOO FERAL* TO LIVE IN SAKURASHIN FIRST LIVE HERE.
THAT'S HOW IT'S ALWAYS BEEN, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN LESS AND LESS OF THEM AS OF LATE.
TNK TNK TNK
STOOL
THAT JUST GOES TO SHOW THERE ARE FEWER WILD DEMONS.
TIMES CHANGE.
HUH...
OOH, THAT'S GOOD! WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO COOK?
FU, FU...
SHE'S A QUICK LEARNER,
AND A GOOD EXAMPLE OF HOW IT ISN'T TALENT OR ENVIRONS THAT DETERMINE A PERSON'S ABILITY TO LEARN...
...BUT THE STRENGTH OF ONE'S CURIOSITY.
SHE MUST BE REALLY STUDIOUS.
SHE LEARNED HOW TO USE THE PHONE I GAVE HER IN NO TIME,
AND IT SEEMS SHE'S BEEN ASKING HER COOKING TEACHER ALL SORTS OF QUESTIONS.
TEACHER?
BRRR

I HEAR SHE'S GOOD WITH JAPANESE CUISINE.
HUH...
BEEP
ピッ
BEEP
ピッ
TAK
TAK
TAK
IT BROOKE...
ぼろ
DRIP
ぼろ
DRIP
IT'S JUST OUT OF BATTERY.
CHARGE IT FOR A WHILE.
YOU ALL HAVE HELPED ENOUGH.
GO ON OUT AND PLAY!
ぽい
TOSS
ぽい
TOSS
ミーン
MEEE
ミーン
MEEE

IT'S A MIYAMA STAG BEETLE!
ぼ〜ん
BADOOM
WOW, IT LOOKS SO STRONG. WON'T IT PINCH?
NOPE!
I CAUGHT ONE! IS THIS A SWEETFISH? GOOD EATIN' TONIGHT!
NO, THAT'S A CHAR.
THEY'RE TASTY.
OH. WHAT ABOUT THIS ONE?
SPSH
THAT'S A RAINBOW TROUT.
A-HA.
THEN WHAT ABOUT ...
SWOOSH
AREN'T YOU TOO GOOD AT SNATCHING FISH, MINA?!
OH, YEAH. THIS WAY!
FWOO
OOP!

WAIT UP! WE'RE CITY GIRLS!
AAAH-AH-AAAH
HEY! WHEN'D YOU GET SO ADAPTABLE, MINA?!
ぴょこっ
POP
WOOOW!
NOW THAT'S SOMETHIN'! WHAT A NICE PLACE!
YEAH.
FU, FU, FU.

YOU SHOULD JUST STAY HERE! THE CITY'S TOO MUCH HUSTLE AND BUSTLE!
MMM ...
I LIKE IT HERE,
BUT IT SEEMS NICE THERE, TOO.
THIS PLACE IS INTERESTING,
BUT THE TOWN SEEMS INTERESTING, TOO.
YOU SOUND PRETTY WISHY-WASHY.
I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
IT'S NOT LIKE THIS SCENERY WILL GO AWAY IF YOU MOVE TO TOWN.
YOU MIGHT HAVE WAY MORE FUN THERE, TOO.
SHIDOU SAID YOU SHOULDN'T LIMIT YER OWN CHOICES.
I WASN'T SURE WHY HE WAS SAYIN' THAT TO A COUPLE OF KIDS...

...BUT I GUESS HE HAD A POINT.
SORRY AGAIN. THIS WILL BE THE LAST HELP I ASK FOR.
NO BIGGIE! JUST CALL IT A LITTLE AFTER-MEAL EXERCISE!
ぽんっ SWOOSH
ガしガし SCRUB SCRUB

HUP!
ゆらんっ
LEAN
WHOA!
THAT'S DANGEROUS! CARRY A LITTLE AT A TIME!
ゆら
WOBL
IT'S FINE!
ゆら・・・
WOBL
ニコ
SMILE
ニコ
SMILE
...
ガシャン
KRSH
つるっ
SLIP
WHAT'D I TELL YA?
ARE YOU OKAY?
ぐぐ
RRG
YEESH...
HM.
WELL DONE. THEY'RE SPOTLESS.
THESE WILL POUR WELL.

SCRUB SCRUB
しゃっ しゃっ
I THINK THEY'RE CLEAN ENOUGH!
YOU DON'T GET MAD AT HER, HUH?
HM?
NOT NECESSARILY.
I ONLY THINK THAT, RIGHT NOW, TEACHING HER HOW TO PLEASE IS MORE VALUABLE THAN TEACHING HER HOW TO DISPLEASE.
BY DOING SO, SHE'LL NATURALLY LEARN WHAT SHE *SHOULDN'T* DO.
HOW TO PLEASE, AND HOW TO DISPLEASE...
WELL, THAT ONLY GOES FOR WHEN WE DON'T HAVE ANY GUESTS.
WHEN WE DO, I LET HER DO AS SHE PLEASES *ONLY* WHEN I'M AROUND TO PICK UP AFTER HER.
THOUGH IT'S ALL TO HELP HER GROW, I CAN'T VERY WELL LET HER RUN FREELY WITHOUT MY SUPERVISION.

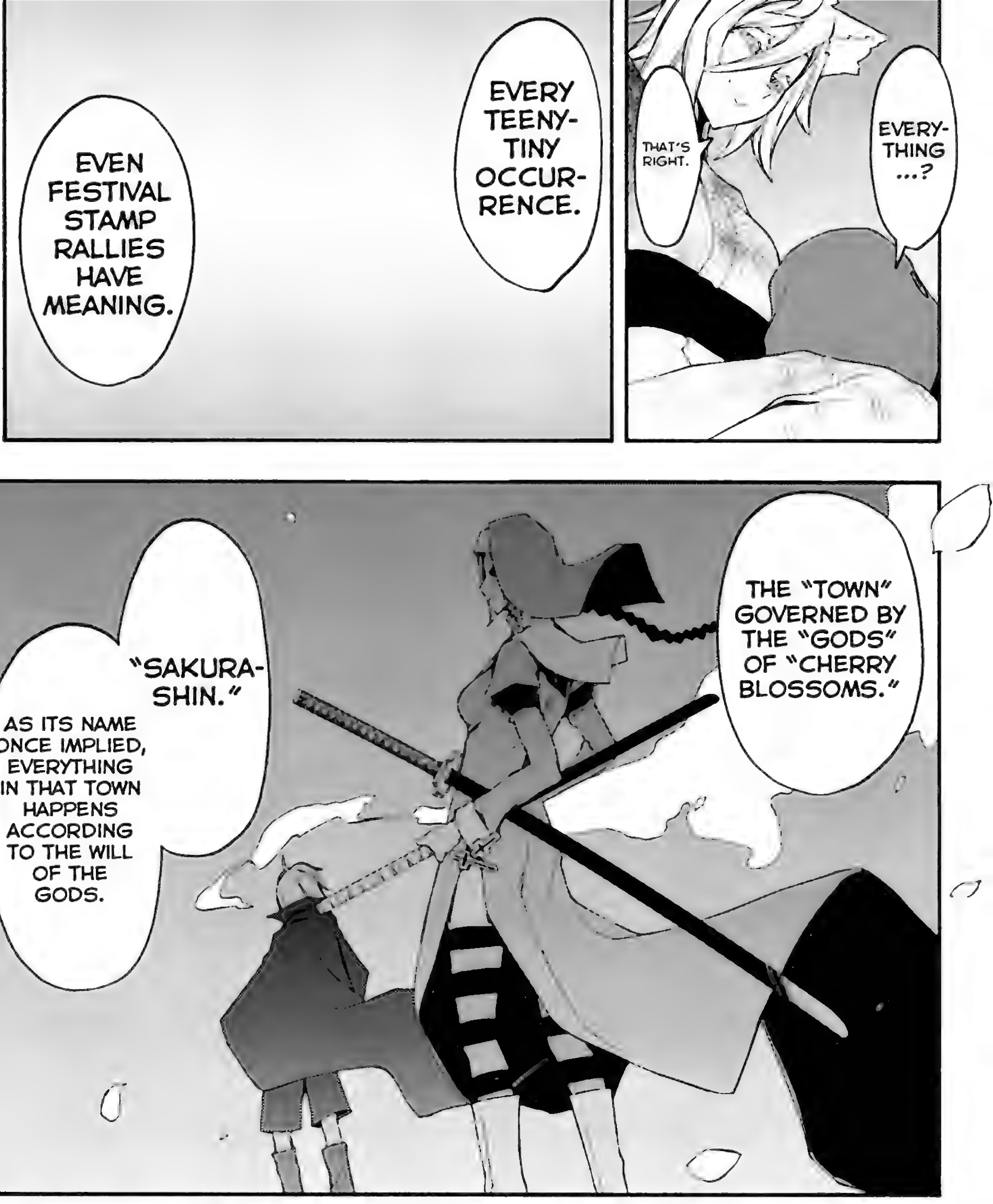
PART OF IT HAS TO DO WITH BEING IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY,
BUT BEFORE THAT, IT'S A MATTER OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS.
I SEE...
ちょん
DIP
WHAT'RE YOU COWERIN' FOR?
HOT WATER...
SHE'S AFRAID OF BATHS.
IT SEEMS SHE WASHED HERSELF IN THE RIVER WHEN SHE WAS LIVING IN THE MOUNTAINS.
SHE'S STILL YET TO TAKE A PROPER BATH.
WHAT?!
THAT'S NO GOOD! IF YOU DON'T BATHE AND STAY HYGIENIC...
カラン
CLACK

...YOU CAN'T WELCOME GUESTS, CAN YA?!
おりゃーっ
ORYAAAH
ぎゃーっ
MYAAAH
ぼっしゃーん…
SPLOOSH
ぬっく
SOAK
ぬく
SOAK
は～
AAH

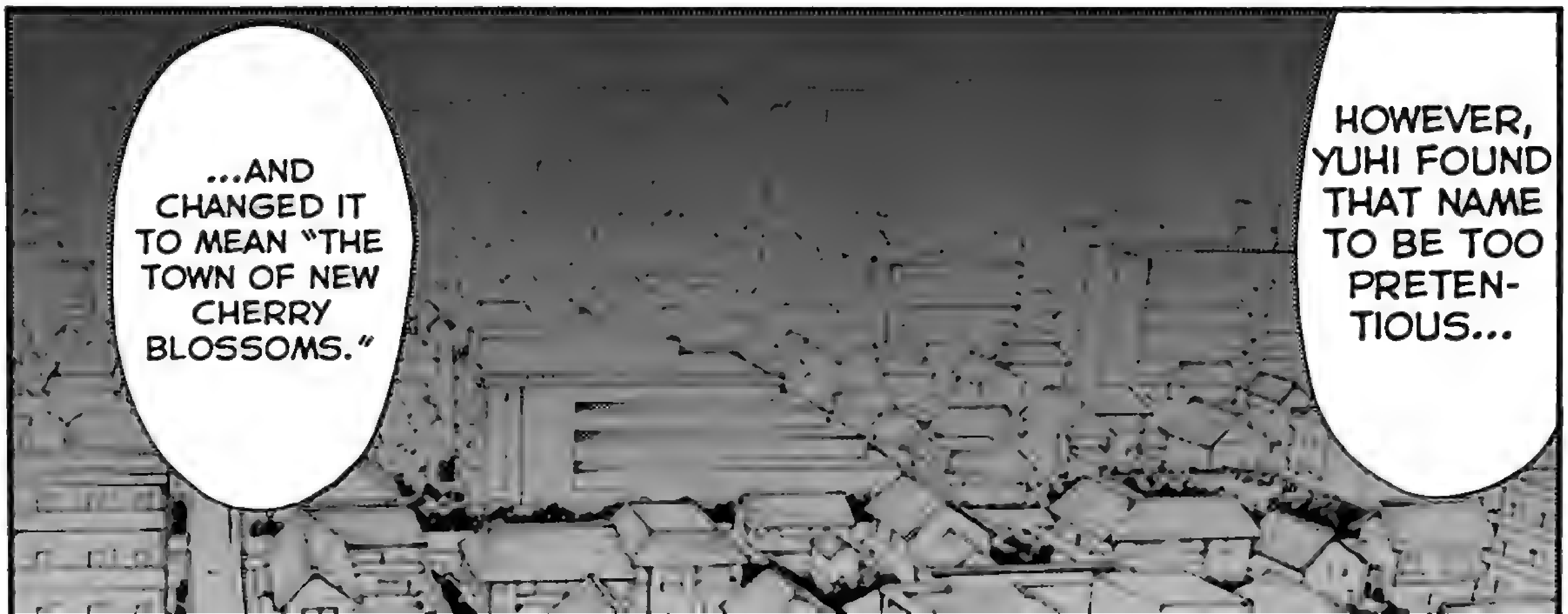
Y'SEE? FEELS NICE, HUH?
AAAAH ...
GULP
MINA
SURE IS NICE SOAKIN' IN A HUGE BATH, HUH, KANA?
かぽーん
KA-PLUNK
KANA ...?
WHOA! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?!
げへへへ
GEH HEH HEH
KANA
ぬ～ん
CREEP
WHO LET THE EGGS SPOOOIL?

そよ
FWIF
そよ…
FWIF
I'M SORRY...
IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT.
THE SULFUR IN THE WATER GOT TO YOU, DID IT?
I SEE YOU STILL HAVE THAT BRUISE...
...FROM WHEN ENJIN KIDNAPPED YOU.
IT SHOWS UP WHENEVER MY BODY GETS WARM.
IT'S FADING LITTLE BY LITTLE, BUT...
GIVE IT TIME.
I'M SURPRISED YOU KNOW ABOUT ENJIN-CHAN...
FU, FU.

IT'S BECAUSE I PREDICTED THE FUTURE.
EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED IN THAT TOWN,
AND WILL HAPPEN UNTIL THE COMING OCTOBER...
...I HAVE ALREADY FORESEEN.
PREDICTION...
DAZE
ぽー...
くいっ
GULP
THAT TOWN IS VERY INTRIGUING.
IT'S QUITE FUN TO PROPHESIZE ABOUT.
BOTH YUHI...
AND YAE...
...HAVE ALSO MADE THEIR PREDICTIONS, THOUGH I DOUBT THEY'VE MENTIONED IT.
AND THEY'RE GUIDING EVERYTHING IN THAT TOWN TOWARDS OCTOBER IN A MEANINGFUL WAY.


EVERYTHING...?
THAT'S RIGHT.
EVERY TEENY-TINY OCCURRENCE.
EVEN FESTIVAL STAMP RALLIES HAVE MEANING.
THE "TOWN" GOVERNED BY THE "GODS" OF "CHERRY BLOSSOMS."
"SAKURASHIN."
AS ITS NAME ONCE IMPLIED, EVERYTHING IN THAT TOWN HAPPENS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF THE GODS.

*A reference to the kanji used to write Sakurashin.


HOWEVER, YUHI FOUND THAT NAME TO BE TOO PRETENTIOUS...
...AND CHANGED IT TO MEAN "THE TOWN OF NEW CHERRY BLOSSOMS."

GULP
I SEE...
IT MUST BE HARD HAVING TO THINK OF SO MUCH...
INDEED.
THOUGH THERE ARE SIMPLER WAYS TO THINK ABOUT IT.
THE HIIZUMI FAMILY HEAD, *AKINA HIIZUMI.*
THE AVATAR OF DRAGONS AND ACTING MAYOR, *HIME YARIZAKURA.*

A HALF-DEMON NEITHER HUMAN NOR MONSTER, ***KOTOHA ISONE.***
AND THE ONLY RELATIVE OF ENJIN'S HOST BODY, GIN, ***AO NANAMI.***
SLOSH
IN SHORT, THESE FOUR HOLD THE KEY.
THAT ONE GROUP...
GULP
PHEW...

WHOOSH
YOUNG LADY, ARE YOU ABLE...
...TO KEEP WHAT I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU A SECRET?
SWIF
す…
CAN YOU HOLD IT SAFELY IN YOUR BREAST...
...WITHOUT IT BREAKING YOUR HEART IN TWO?
FWOO
すー…
すやすや
SNORE

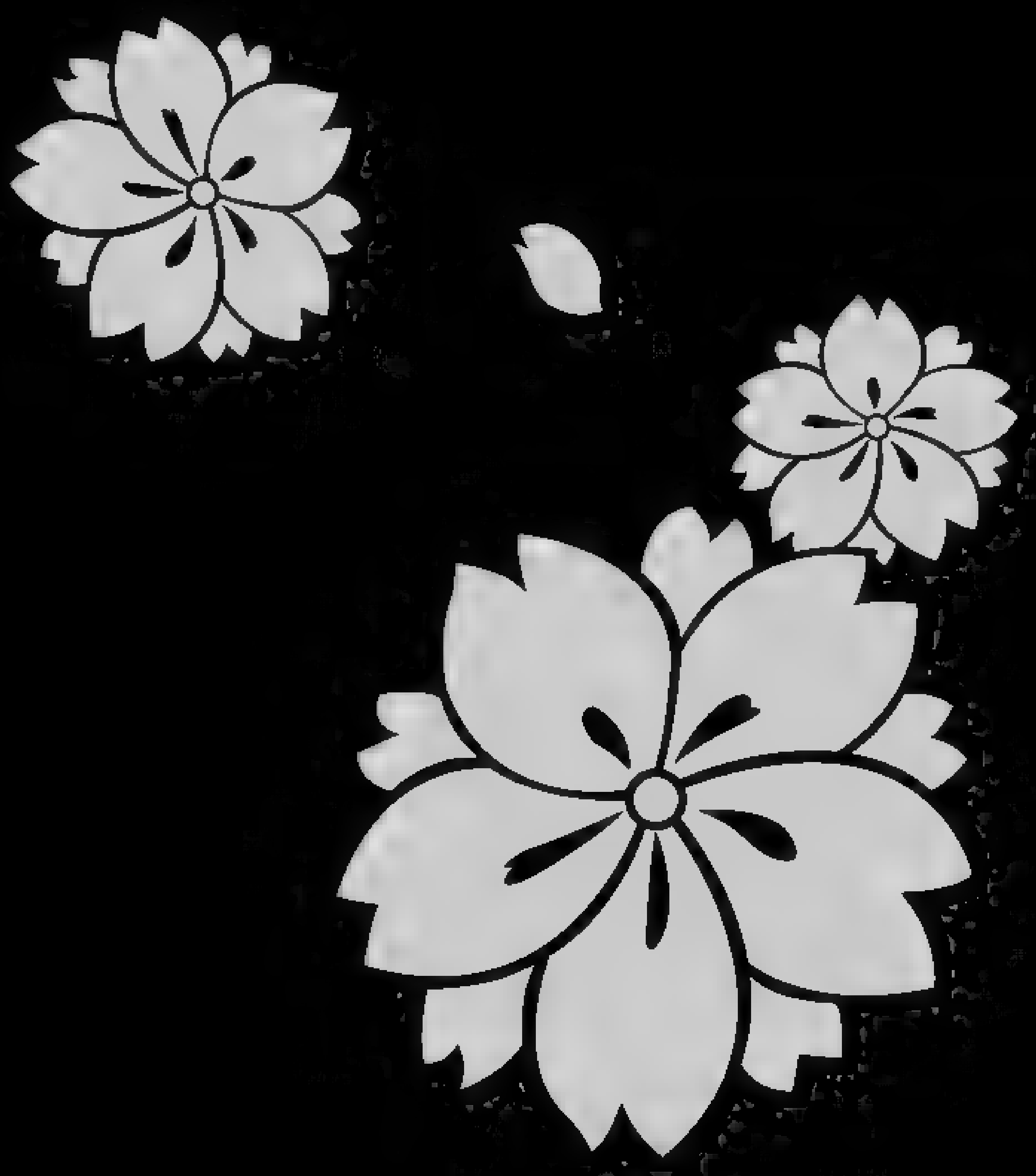
I'VE SAID TOO MUCH. WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO ME?
I MUST HAVE DRUNK TOO MUCH.
I'M THE ONE WHO CAN'T SEEM TO KEEP IT A SECRET.
THE BURDEN OF THE TRUTH IS TOO MUCH FOR ME TO BEAR ALONE.
CLENCH ぎゅ…
HIME YARI-ZAKURA.
AKINA HIIZUMI.
AO NANAMI.
KOTOHA ISONE.
TO THINK THAT COME THE MONTH OF GODS...
FWOOO

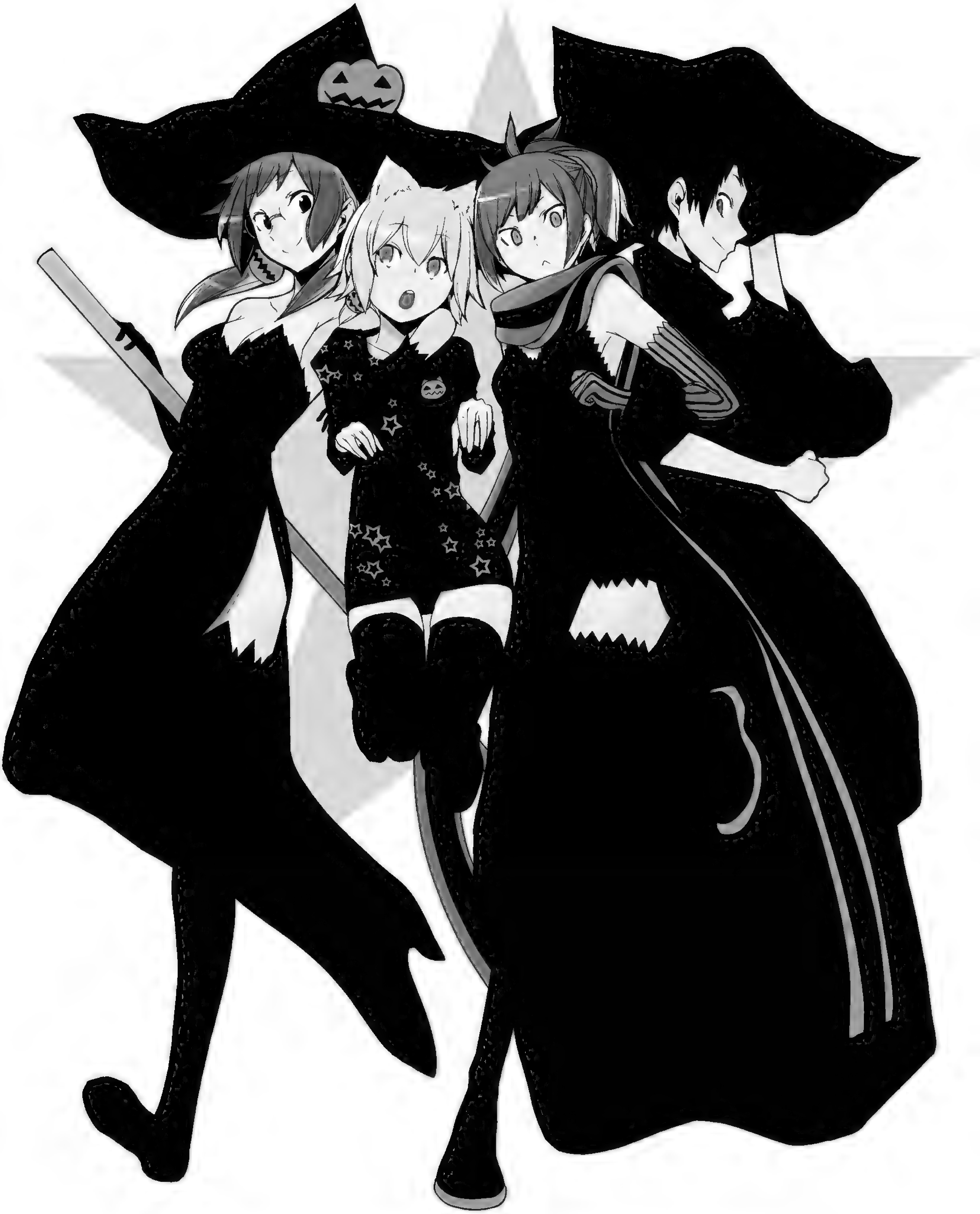
...THAT QUARTET ...

...WOULD BE DOWN A MEMBER...

To be Continued .....

YOZAKURA QUARTET 18





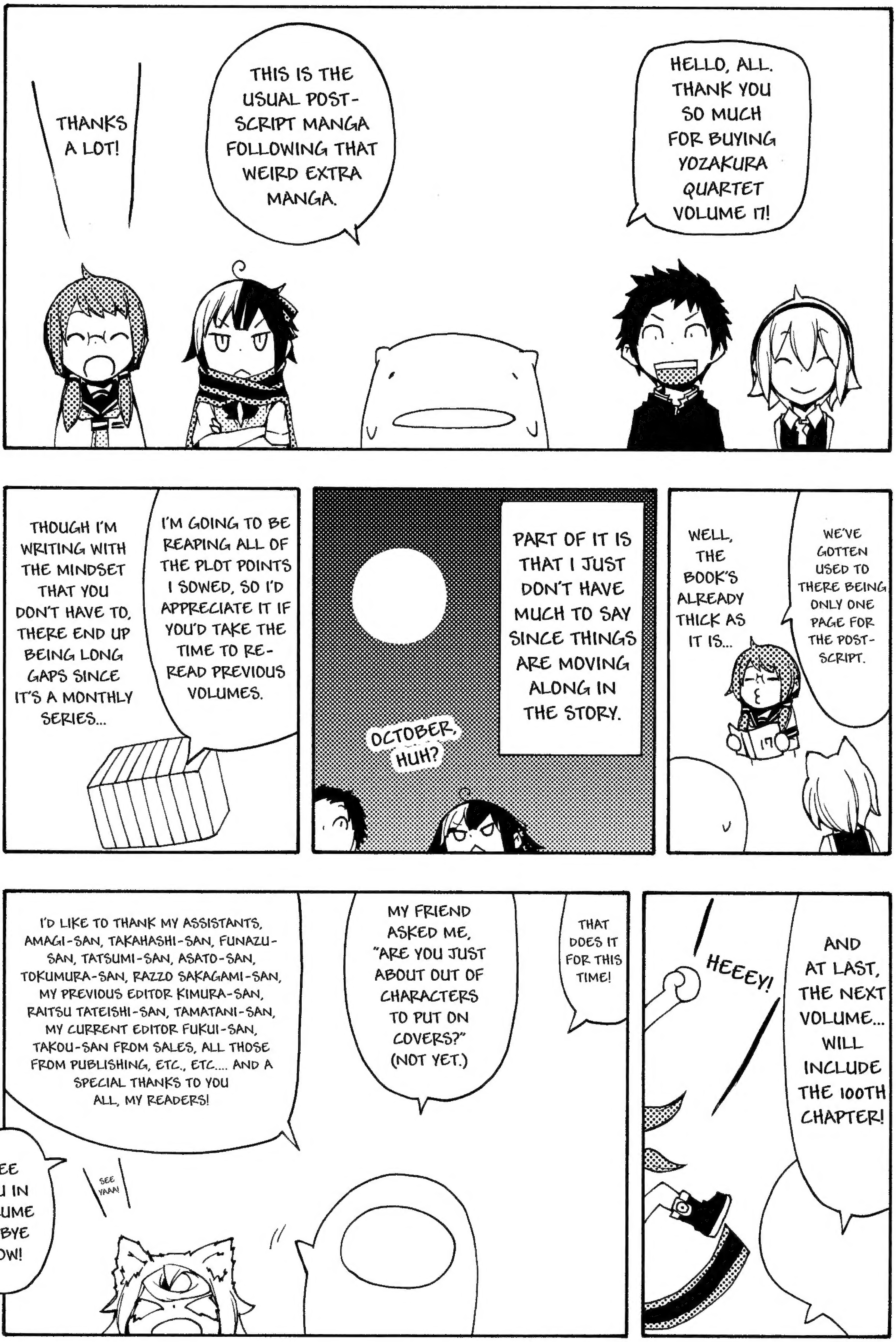
MONTHLY SHONEN SIRIUS JANUARY 2015 ISSUE COVER

ガチャ CLACK
AAH, TESTS ARE FINALLY OVER.
I STUDIED SO MUCH MY FINGERS...
グニ WRIGGLE
グニ WRIGGLE
よざかル!
YOZAQUART!
...HUR-
グニ GROPE
KYA AAH!
SORRY! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE CHANGING!
WAIT, THIS IS MY ROOM!
OH, SORRY, NEWCOMER. DID I PUT YOU IN A ROOM THAT WAS ALREADY TAKEN?
すっ SWIF
SO, YOU'RE THE CULPRIT!
THIS IS A THOUSAND TIMES WORSE THAN KARAOKE RESERVATIONS OVERLAPPING!
WELL, THIS IS A PINCH... THERE AREN'T ANY MORE EMPTY ROOMS.
IT NEVER ENDS WITH YOU, HUH?
SO, WHAT NOW?
よざかる荘

Sign: YozaQuart Manor

WHY DON'T YOU TWO ROOM TOGETHER?
OUT OF THE QUESTION...
UMM...
I WOULDN'T MIND... LIVING WITH THE LANDLADY...
OH, THAT'S HOW YOU ROLL.
THAT WORKS OUT PERFECTLY FOR YOU, RIGHT?
I MEAN, YOU LIKE GIRLS...
HUH...?
NO, I'M NOT INTO GIRLS AT ALL...
THAT'S JUST KINDA...
CREEPY...
OH, RIGHT! I FORGOT YOUR PERSONALITY'S NOTHING LIKE THE MAIN STORY!
I COMPLETELY FORGOT THE PLAN WAS TO GIVE EVERYONE THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE PERSONALITY...
I WAS EXACTLY THE SAME.
ME, TOO.

POSTSCRIPT MANGA


HELLO, ALL. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR BUYING YOZAKURA QUARTET VOLUME 17!
THIS IS THE USUAL POST-SCRIPT MANGA FOLLOWING THAT WEIRD EXTRA MANGA.
THANKS A LOT!
WE'VE GOTTEN USED TO THERE BEING ONLY ONE PAGE FOR THE POST-SCRIPT.
WELL, THE BOOK'S ALREADY THICK AS IT IS...
17
PART OF IT IS THAT I JUST DON'T HAVE MUCH TO SAY SINCE THINGS ARE MOVING ALONG IN THE STORY.
OCTOBER, HUH?
I'M GOING TO BE REAPING ALL OF THE PLOT POINTS I SOWED, SO I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU'D TAKE THE TIME TO RE-READ PREVIOUS VOLUMES.
THOUGH I'M WRITING WITH THE MINDSET THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO, THERE END UP BEING LONG GAPS SINCE IT'S A MONTHLY SERIES...
AND AT LAST, THE NEXT VOLUME... WILL INCLUDE THE 100TH CHAPTER!
HEEEY!
THAT DOES IT FOR THIS TIME!
MY FRIEND ASKED ME, "ARE YOU JUST ABOUT OUT OF CHARACTERS TO PUT ON COVERS?" (NOT YET.)
I'D LIKE TO THANK MY ASSISTANTS, AMAGI-SAN, TAKAHASHI-SAN, FUNAZU-SAN, TATSUMI-SAN, ASATO-SAN, TOKUMURA-SAN, RAZZO SAKAGAMI-SAN, MY PREVIOUS EDITOR KIMURA-SAN, RAITSU TATEISHI-SAN, TAMATANI-SAN, MY CURRENT EDITOR FUKUI-SAN, TAKOU-SAN FROM SALES, ALL THOSE FROM PUBLISHING, ETC., ETC.... AND A SPECIAL THANKS TO YOU ALL, MY READERS!
SEE YAAA!
SEE YOU IN VOLUME 18! BYE NOW!

Yozakura Quartet 17

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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